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THE SMART SET

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THE MERRY MONTH

from the middle of December to the middle of January is a period of recreation and travel, when minds are hungry for bright, clever, holiday stories.

TRANSATLANTIC TALES for **JANUARY** will appear on the 20th of December, and will contain more stories of surpassing excellence and charm than have ever appeared before in a single copy of any magazine. Its contents are:

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THE OUTLAW'S GOD (A tale of the Swedish mountains).
BUSINESS AND A PAIR OF GRAY EYES (A lawyer's experience).
THE SCARLET KOBOLD (From the German of Georg von der Gabelentz).
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FOR JANUARY

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OTHER NOTABLE TOPICS

At the Edge of Canada in the Far Northwest, by Clifton Johnson

A picture of present day pioneers at work building a nation. The article deals intimately with the life of the men and women who are facing the problems of existence on the frontier, with their pleasures, their "society," their plans and their outlook.

Old Salem Ships and Sailors: I. The Vikings of American Commerce, by Ralph D. Paine

In the old log books left by the hardy New England sea captains, is a record of the brave days when the American merchant marine led the world. From these store-houses of romantic fact the author has derived a new and true story of a great era.

Lavinsky and the Strad, by Emerson Hough

"Or, as the author humorously dubs the story, "A tale of art by the wayside." A self-styled musical connoisseur who is rather "nigh" in his dealings with the untutored children of the back-woods here meets his match and is very neatly "done."

Moorea, by Hugo Parton

Such is the euphonious name of "the happiest spot on earth," the new and real Utopia; it is fetchingly described in this article.

The noteworthy colored illustrations by Charles Sarka fairly breathe with the indolent tropical Moorean life they picture.

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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
ZINE CLEVERNESS

Vol. XXIV

JANUARY, 1908

No. 1

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WILLIAM D. MANN, President

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WANTED—AN ORIGINAL GENTLEMAN

By Anne Warner

I

ST. ELOI had just gone out to telegraph the countess. The countess demanded a telegram assuring her of St. Eloi's well-being every morning that he was too far away to come in his motor and assure her personally of the fact. What the countess demanded of St. Eloi she invariably got, for she was very charming and he was very much in love. Dagobert was very much disgusted with his friend for being so much in love, because the countess was married—Dagobert's own experience in life had lain mainly along courses which develop the muscles instead of the heart and lead to matches instead of to other men's wives. He was a puritan by ancestry and his friend was a monarchist by the same token. He was American and the other man was French. The one was blond and the other dark. Indeed, everything was as different as different can be with the exception of a certain two years in the life of each, which two years had been spent at the same school in Ouchy and had resulted in so fast a friendship that all their differences were continually re-bridged by its strength and solidity.

When Dagobert, one week previous to the opening of my story, had finished doing up the English with his companion athletes he had felt a more tremendous longing for St. Eloi than for any further results of glory, and had crossed the channel at once in search of a happy reunion. He had not known that there was a countess then, but he happened to arrive in Paris the same

day that the countess's husband did the same thing, and it followed that, whatever St. Eloi might feel in his heart, there was for the time being no countess in his daily life. For M. le Général (the count) was so fearfully jealous that even the countess agreed in the advisability of the two young men's immediate departure for anywhere. Her husband had brought her eleven cases from Annam, and she felt able to be happy even though lonely. But she stipulated for the telegram daily—and she received it.

"What a fool you are!" Dagobert (in bed) said to St. Eloi (in the large dressing-room that connected their sleeping-rooms). "A married woman, too!"

He spoke in German because they had agreed to speak the language of whatever country they were in, and they were now in Hanover.

"Ach, young one," said St. Eloi, laughing, "only wait—only wait!"

"Me!" said Dagobert, "a married woman! Never."

St. Eloi came out of the dressing-room and went in among his own belongings.

"I go now," he called presently, "and from the consul's office I go direct to Herrenhausen. What will you do?"

"Go to the bank," Dagobert called back.

St. Eloi approached the connecting door.

"I think that you will need identification at the bank," he said kindly. "Better cash a cheque here in the hotel; they know me in the office. Or I'll lend you some money."

"I never borrow," said Dagobert. "I promised my father. I've a letter of credit, anyhow—I don't bother with cheques. So that's all straight."

"Very good," said St. Eloi, and departed. He was going away for the day and Dagobert was very glad, for he was thoroughly weary and turned over at once and went to sleep again.

He did not waken until nearly noon, and then he remembered with a sudden coming to his senses that the German banks close between one and three. As a matter of fact, each German town is a law unto itself as to the time when its banks close, but he only recalled one occasion when he had arrived somewhere at one o'clock and been forced to remain poverty-stricken for two mortal hours. The vividness of his recollections prodded him to a more than ordinarily hasty toilet and the instant that he was finished he sought his letter of credit. He had meant to go to the bank the afternoon before and had had the whole bill-book with him. He looked through the pockets of that suit, and the bill-book was gone.

As soon as he fully realized what had occurred he instituted a search which has seldom been equaled and never surpassed as to thoroughness; and then when he was certain that the bill-book was gone he sank into a chair and sat there, staring and glaring—and would have been swearing, too, had he not been so angry.

Among all the new sensations aroused in the human soul by foreign travel, that which he was experiencing is perhaps the most acute. It penetrates every fiber, mental and physical, dulls the past and—for the moment—completely drowns the future. The confusion of one's churned-up thoughts is invariably redoubled by the cyclonic appearance of one's belongings. The larger one's wardrobe the more clothes strew the floor; the larger one's collection of personal luxuries the more of such articles are to be seen about upside down and inside out; and the more orderly one is in the habit of being the more completely disordered one must

be under the existing circumstances. Dagobert had gone among his own on the principle of a dachshund, and his own lay witness to the fidelity of the imitation—the bedroom and the dressing-room were both piled up with raiment and sprinkled with footgear, and in the midst of all sat the unhappy young man, gripping his clenched fingers behind his head and gnawing first one end of his mustache and then the other as he tried in vain to think what he could have done with the missing bill-book.

St. Eloi was, of course, far on his way to Herrenhausen by this time. But he could not have helped, anyhow. Dagobert was glad he was gone and out of the way so that he could battle alone with his problem. If he had to lose all his financial backing at once and so suddenly, he was just as well pleased to have a little free time for consideration. There were many huge and fundamental differences between the two young men, as I already pointed out, and in spite of their friendship their conversations were often hotly varied. To Dagobert, with his blunt American republicanism there was something utterly silly in St. Eloi's exquisitely courtly hypocrisy.

"If I ever kiss a woman's hand I shall mean it," he had declared upon the extremely early morning which had followed that extremely late night which had followed his latest arrival in Paris.

"*Mon Dieu*, and do you think that I don't mean it?" St. Eloi had asked in great astonishment. "*Mon cher*, I always meant it—I began to mean it when I was too young to know what I meant."

Dagobert had laughed at that and they had forthwith retired to sleep it off.

But the next day St. Eloi—after a most egregious speech at the door of the brougham of a great lady who had ceased to be beautiful before he was born—had felt some further explanation due to his friend's tendency to sincerity.

"When I came to really love," he had

said, "I knew how to make her happy, for I was an adept at love-making."

Dagobert looked at him and said nothing. He had not then heard of Madame la Comtesse.

"You will halt and stumble," St. Eloi continued. "When you fall on your knees you will tear her lace."

"She will see, at least, that I have never been in the habit of falling on my knees," the other young man had replied.

"Pah, she will not think of that—she will think of her lace."

"Perhaps—if she is French," the American had said.

"French," the Frenchman had said. "What has the country to do with it? It is the gown that will vex her—and the explanation to her husband."

"To her husband!" cried Dagobert. "Do you think I would make love to a married woman?"

St. Eloi nodded. "Of course," he answered. "Life would be too *bête* if it were not so."

Dagobert felt hotly, but refrained. St. Eloi was a "liberal education" indeed.

A day later the countess in all her glory had burst upon them in the Bois, and the American, to his infinite amazement, had not been able to make even a beginning at a proper tabulation of vices and virtues, when the pretty young woman had promptly deserted her carriage to walk between him and St. Eloi. Nothing could be more charming than her face, figure and fascinations. It caused one's principles to crack at their base and settle into bewilderingly novel forms. But the day after when it rained and the general returned unexpectedly from Tonkin-China, and St. Eloi remade every plan that he had planned with a haste that was feverish—ah, then Dagobert's conscience had its innings. On the Brussels train he even went so far as to discourse on various moral ideals to his friend and the latter seemed touched by his interest—even though he was writing a note in pencil on his knee at the same time.

"You are too sincere," he said once,

looking up most earnestly; "you are really clever—but too sincere."

Dagobert laughed at his tone of remonstrance.

"It is fortunate that you are of a country where there is only dishonesty—never diplomacy—for you could not be dishonest and you are not diplomatic."

St. Eloi said these words with well-weighted emphasis.

"Am I not diplomatic with you?"

"With me!" said St. Eloi, opening his eyes, "but, *mon ami*, one-half of the time I amuse you and the rest of the time you wish that you might despise me only that you like me much too well."

The words were so stunning in the conciseness of their exposition that for an instant Dagobert knew not what to say; then he laughed.

"And yet I love you," said St. Eloi, with a glance that nursed truth in its reflection, "and I wish you might learn that a little graceful bending does only good to the straightest back. So!"

After that their bon camaraderie had flowed on without a ripple until the day before the present day when they had arrived in Hanover and at once quarreled over a Hanoverian princess who had been dead two hundred years, Dagobert standing up for the justice of her punishment and St. Eloi (who was becoming horribly lonesome for his countess) standing up for the justice of her love. "A brute for a husband," he said, "and of course, a lover always follows." Which premise Dagobert, even though he now knew all about the countess himself, denied with fierceness.

"My friend," said St. Eloi, "you lead me to pray heartily that the first hand you may kiss will wear a wedding-ring."

Dagobert was so close to being really vexed that he would not trust himself to speak.

"You are young," said St. Eloi, "and extremely foolish. Theory and practice are indistinguishable to you. But wait!"

"Yes, I'll wait," said his friend,

"but you'll see. A right-minded man in my country doesn't fall in love with another man's wife——"

"Except in the newspapers," reminded St. Eloi.

"The set in the newspapers aren't the whole country; they're a long way off."

"They may be a long way off, but love is always near," said the Frenchman. "You are young; you are seven months younger than I. Seven months ago I was as stupid as you are now. Yes—that's true."

"It's a pity you didn't stay so," said Dagobert.

"A pity!" St. Eloi arose and went and looked out upon the Platz. "A pity! Oh, you stupid, stupid brute! Only wait."

Then Dagobert had laughed and they had both undressed and gone to bed, being very tired from the journey.

The next morning had dawned as described and its day had gone on in the manner already narrated. Noon had found St. Eloi at Herrenhausen and Dagobert in the midst of the chaos of his wardrobe. Of course, it was inevitable that he could not churn them about forever and so he finally went over to a big chair and sank into it and strove to rally his thoughts—for he was young enough to take it all most seriously.

After the first shock of losing all one's financial assets is over the usual course is to notify the bank of the loss, letters of credit being notably ephemeral and forever apt to take wing at unexpected moments. The bank duly notified, one had next to cable home for money with which to stem poverty's rising tide. Dagobert knew all this and contemplated the humiliation of the proceeding with extreme bitterness, even while he rose from the chair to ring for coffee and take another dive among his pockets. He felt as if he could *not* go out and confess himself at once so idiotic or so careless. But then he further felt that he would have no alternative course. And then he grit his teeth and swore madly, "Never, never, *never!*"

The *garçon* came in while he was swearing and brought the morning paper with the coffee. He surveyed the room in unconcealed amazement, and asked if gracious sir would like the chambermaid at once. Gracious sir declined the chambermaid, and so the coffee-tray was deposited upon a table and peace reigned again.

Dagobert, left alone, approached the tray, poured out a cup of coffee, broke the shell of one egg with such vigor that he wished he hadn't, and then opened the paper and looked with disgust upon the news of the day as presented in the curly type of German letters. The various comings and goings of royalties and the local editorials could not be expected to divert a young American whom Fate had suddenly cast into the bottommost pit of despair, and he turned page after page in vain to see if the hyphenated New-York that is *au fait* in Europe had been doing anything while he was asleep that would make him forget his personal woes. But alas, all was in vain; the more he strove to find new interests in life the more the gloom of his own situation seemed to deepen and the acknowledgment of his loss, which would have to be presently cabled to his father, loomed ever more distastefully before him.

Suddenly he put down his coffee-cup and made a final dash for his overcoat. He thought that he remembered having thrust the bill-book into his outside overcoat pocket when he made an end of his ticket at the station, and of having transferred it to its proper place in the inside pocket after his arrival at the hotel. But all in vain! It was not there.

He came back with a heavier frown than ever and reopened the paper in a new place. The first thing that his eyes fell on was an advertisement written in English, set up in Latin type and heavily leaded:

WANTED INSTANTLY—An original gentleman, speaking perfect English. Apply as quickly as possible to Mrs. Carpenter, Wien-erhof, Hildesheim.

"Now what under heaven is 'an

original gentleman'?" was Dagobert's first thought, and the next was that the situation offered would just save him from all the pressing difficulties of his predicament. "Of course she expects to pay for the desired originality," he reflected gleefully, "and I'll apply and get paid. I don't know what she wants, but I'll bet I can do it and then I won't have to cable for money or say a word to a soul about what's the matter."

He re-read the advertisement as he thought these thoughts, and his enthusiasm increased momentarily. St. Eloi would see how an American shines forth in an hour of need, and also incidentally he would have some sport.

"Mrs. Carpenter's American, too, of course," he said to himself, for one need travel only a little way into the jungle of foreign habits to learn forever that the women of those lands never for one second dream of departing outside the bounds of conventionality, or at least, if they do so, they make it an invariable rule to accomplish their end unsigned.

"An original gentleman!" said Dagobert again, "an original gentleman!" What does she mean? What does she want? What does she expect to get? And when she gets it what does she expect to do with it or to have it do for her?"

Then he entirely forgot the letter of credit and all his consequent tribulation for the moment and became his usual self again.

"I might put on a mackintosh over my pajamas, shave off half of my mustache, hire a baby-wagon and go to Mrs. Carpenter that way," he declared. "I wonder if that would strike her as original. Oh, by George, what a jolly lark! I believe I'll—!" And with the declaration he rose and went and looked out of the window. It was a clear, bright October day—a splendid day to go on an adventure of any sort.

Dagobert's nature was the kind that rebounds easily, and he only remembered now that he had thirty or forty marks still in his purse and that St. Eloi was gone for the day. The double souvenir raised his spirits to such an ex-

tent that he felt sure that whatever he had lost would surely be found by the chambermaid, and so he gave up all idea of notifying the bank, tore out the advertisement, and proceeded at once to terminate his toilet. There was some of it done, but considerable left to do, and all the while that he was washing and brushing, and booting and shirting, and buttoning and studding, and tying and scarf-pinning, he was thinking, "What is 'an original gentleman'?" and anticipating eagerly the finding out.

When he was finally finished dressing he looked through his pockets and found that added to the loose change he also had a one hundred-mark note left. Twenty-five dollars is a sum whose possibilities are larger across the waters than here, and he felt quite rich at once. He therefore sallied gaily forth in quest of information as to the whereabouts of, and means of communication with, Hildesheim, a place which dwelt vaguely among his souvenirs as cited for something by Baedeker in that part of the book that comes just after "Hotels" and which a man reads when he can't yawn any more and still has two hours to ride before getting there.

The hotel *portier* told him he could go to Hildesheim by train or by tram. That sounded simple. The tram sounding simpler, he decided to go that way. Dagobert had by this time so far recovered his usual superabundant spirits that when he arrived at the Theaterplatz just in time to see the Hildesheim tram sliding out of sight it did not depress him to learn that there would not be another for half an hour. He used the half-hour to take a walk around the Leine Schloss, and leaned for some time upon the balustrade that runs beyond the moat reflecting upon the French standard of honor which had led St. Eloi to stand up for Sophia Dorothea. Sophia Dorothea—be it said *en passant*—was the wife of George the First of England, the pretty princess of Celle who was married at sixteen to that most unpleasant of Hanoverian princes. The young American knew the story, which, however

much one may differ from St. Eloi's moral views, is certainly sad enough to command all sympathy. Up in the Alte Schloss, in a suite now practically no more, the windows of which once gave upon the waters that flowed below Dagobert's eyes, Sophia Dorothea, crown princess of Hanover, lived and loved; and it was in a hall of the same wing, still existing, that Königsmark, leaving her on that early morn that ended their night of plans for elopement, was set upon and murdered by four men, the hirelings of her father-in-law's mistress. The story goes that they flung his body into a hole and showered quicklime down thick upon it, and the next day Sophia Dorothea waited and waited for the hour that was to bring her freedom. Toward night they barred her doors and sealed her papers, and the next day they told her Königsmark was dead. The people of Hanover crowded around the castle gates, those very gates that lay to left and right of the placid stranger who scorned illegal love, and the emissaries of kings and emperors plied the old Elector and his Hanoverian ministers for keys to the mysteries within, but no answer was for them. In the midst of the troubles and confusion the unhappy princess looked her last upon the peaceful Leine, and was carried prisoner to Ahlden, where she died some thirty years later. When the Schloss was rebuilt during the present century they found Königsmark's skeleton and signet ring in an oubliette. And so ends the reality of that which St. Eloi found so natural and which Dagobert so hotly condemned.

"She was married," he thought now, looking down into the flowing waters. "I don't see how the idea ever begins to get into a married woman's head!" Then he carried his meditations on a bit further and wondered how a decent fellow ever justified himself in his own eyes if he became conscious of admiring a married woman and didn't decamp out of the field of fight right then and there.

After a while he walked around the

castle and back to the tram waiting-place and found the Hildesheimer-Bahn to be there now, waiting, and ready to convey him to Hildesheim. He got in and prepared (by crossing his legs) for a twenty minutes' ride. I might say piously, "heaven help him!" only heaven never helps anyone who starts from Hanover to Hildesheim by tram.

It was a full hour and a half before Dagobert and his burning impatience finally arrived at the end of that particular line. Our friend lost no time in promptly flying out of his cage, and although there was another tram which would have gladly borne him to his destination either in its first- or second-class end, he felt that he had had a plenteous sufficiency of that form of travel, and so took a cab. On the way up he remembered what Baedeker had said about Hildesheim and its timber architecture, and looked ahead and on either side to the full extent of his optical powers. The streets were narrow and crooked, and everyone was a good study in rapidly diminishing perspective. The houses projected with each story and the roofs were delightful. Dagobert was neither artist nor antiquarian, but he enjoyed his ride, and felt that the setting for whatever was about to happen would be worthy of it—whatever it might turn out to be.

The cab adapted itself most marvelously to the exigencies of the situation, which consisted mainly of dachshunds, street-car tracks, babies and unexpected corners, all apparently enjoying the right of way over vehicles. Dagobert admired the cabman's good temper, until he recollected that he was German.

Finally they penetrated a peculiarly narrow street where nothing could ever by any chance get by anything if ever they should by ill-luck encounter there; and on rounding a curve, came full upon some outwork of the Wienerhof itself.

The Wienerhof is one of Hildesheim's brightest jewels of antiquity. It stands corner-ways on a very narrow street,

and its windows and door-step encroach yet further upon that same narrowness. It has glass panes in plenty in every window and wood carving runs over their tops—a wonderful old carving which echoes the naïve art of the first New England Primer. The dear, quaint windows all open inward, and those on the first floor are full of long-leaved plants and look directly on the café—or the street; it all depends on whether you are in the street or in the café!

The cab stopped in front of the door and Dagobert got out and paid the driver. Then he went into the small, square medieval hall, which was dark and had coats hanging on a rack and bags expecting to travel soon, piled up by the door; a carved table with a carved bench stood in the light, a second in the shadow and a third in the dark, and a bell with "*Bedienung*" over it showed its little white face in the midst of some black oak paneling to the left.

"I expect to be *bedient*," thought Dagobert, and rang it at once.

The kling-klinkle of the bell brought the head waiter, or, in German parlance, the *Oberkellner*, out of that one of the Wienerhof chain of restaurants which lies first beyond the entrance-hall. The *Oberkellner* was a large, stout man with the most rosy, responsible and joyous of countenances. He looked as if he had washed his face in the milk of human kindness and superintended the Wienerhof for the pure pleasure of the thing, until a complexion perfect in all ways had resulted. When he saw Dagobert his smile deepened from that of one who is without a wish to that of one who has long had a wish and now beholds its longed-for fulfilment. Dagobert, standing flooded in the effulgence resultant, inquired for Mrs. Carpenter.

Immediately the *Oberkellner's* radiance passed all earthly bounds and entered those heavenly realms reserved for such as are fed by the generous. He smiled upon the stranger with the welcome kept for the friends of those same generous individuals, and, praying

the gracious sir to have the goodness to be patient only one or two minutes, went personally to inform the gracious lady of his arrival. Dagobert tried in vain to divine from his manner whether he himself was the first, last or only "original gentleman" who had so far appeared, but before he had had leisure to canvass the outside precincts of the idea the *Oberkellner* returned and prayed him forthwith to ascend two flights to No. 44. Dagobert ascended, and a chambermaid who was wiping the wainscoting showed him the door of No. 44. He felt an interested excitement as he saw that the door was standing wide open, and inferred that the solution of the riddle was just beyond, but when he came square in front of the door he perceived that the room was empty. Mrs. Carpenter had apparently retired to some other apartment, but he knew that he had been announced, and he knew that she had bidden him upstairs, so he went over by the casement window and looked out—and waited.

His view lay up the Wollenweberstrasse—once the street of the Wool Weavers' Guild; or, rather, it lay up the extremely narrow entrance that leads into the other more pretentious quarter. Dagobert found a species of soporific for his uncommonly active imaginings in gazing upon the quiet and placid desertion of so small a way. He could not but—

"Oh, I'm so glad you're a gentleman!" exclaimed a voice behind him.

It certainly gave him an awful start, for whatever he had been expecting he certainly had not expected a voice like that. He could not have catalogued it at the minute, but he knew that it was altogether the sweetest voice which he had ever heard. The awful start occurring simultaneously with that whirl on the heel which etiquette prescribes for a gentleman when a lady speaks to him from behind his back, it followed that one and one-half seconds after first hearing her voice Dagobert first saw the face of—of—(oh, shades of Königsmark, St. Eloi and all the rest of the list!)

"Mrs. Carpenter?" he said interrogatively.

"Yes," she answered, holding out her hand.

So it was so. Of course he had to take her word for it or he could never have believed it—for Mrs. Carpenter looked to be a girl of eighteen—less rather than more. She was a little creature, under five feet surely, fairylike in proportions, her hair just dark enough and just light enough, her eyes just blue enough and just gray enough, her lashes just black enough and just long enough, her mouth just—

"Sit straight down," said Mrs. Carpenter. "We haven't a second to waste."

She spoke in the imperative tone of one who is thoroughly accustomed to command, and Dagobert never dreamed for a second of disobeying her. He took a chair and she perched on the sofa in a way that made him sure she was sitting on one foot, and then she clasped her hands and began to talk.

"I'm so glad you're a gentleman," she said again. "The first two were couriers and then came a teacher from the Berlitz School. I don't see, I'm sure, what they thought I wanted. I said distinctly 'an original gentleman.' I should think that that was plain enough, but no one seemed quite to understand my meaning."

Dagobert felt that a discreet silence was wisest at the minute, and so said nothing. She immediately continued:

"But I mustn't take up any time complaining. Mr. Carpenter won't be gone much longer and we must have everything arranged before he comes back. If he were to come back before it would be all up with me, you know."

It is needless to deny that this statement startled her caller more than a little, although he was so far unaware of the damage she had already done him as to be mainly perturbed on her account.

"Mr. Carpenter is really a very singular man," she went on. "If I'd known just how singular he is I don't believe I'd ever have come to Europe with him—I don't, indeed." She looked

very seriously at Dagobert as she said that, and the clock seized the opportunity to strike three.

"Oh, dear," she exclaimed then, "I mustn't take up any more time talking that way; I must tell you right off what I need. You *are* original—aren't you? And you will help me, won't you? You know that's why I advertised." She paused and looked appealingly at him.

Dagobert felt himself regretting having left his pocket revolver in Hanover, but her appeal made him cease to feel and start to answer—only she did not give him a chance, after all.

"Oh, but you know you will," she continued at once, "so there's no use taking up time talking about it. I'll get right to the main subject. The main subject is Mr. Carpenter. It won't take but twenty-four hours and you can have all the money you want—we're ever so rich—only it must be done pleasantly, and to tell you the truth he isn't always very pleasant and he's never—"

She stopped short and lifted one finger.

"Goodness, there he is now!" she cried beneath her breath.

Before Dagobert had time to think or speak she had darted behind him, opened a door, pushed him through into the next room, and shut it behind him. A man does not have to be very remarkable to have known some precedents, printed or practical, of such situations, and Dagobert's bewilderment would have turned into the behavior of betrayed and enlightened innocence at once had it not been for two circumstances which precluded all action. One was that Mrs. Carpenter had not about her one bit of the evil mental aroma which marks an adventuress, and the other was that the room into which she had so suddenly thrust her caller was already occupied by a maid, who was placidly engaged in sitting on the bed and mending a lace dress. The maid gave a muffled squeal at this sudden invasion of her privacy, and before Dagobert had hardly had time to recover his

equilibrium from the force of Mrs. Carpenter's push by grabbing the washstand, the door opened and Mrs. Carpenter looked in—a bit pale, but smiling.

"It wasn't he," she said. "Come back!"

Dagobert returned to the other room. He felt completely denuded of personal volition and utterly helpless in the hands of Fate.

"Dear me, but that gave me a fright," she said, as she closed the door of the room where the maid was and returned to her former perch on the sofa. "Why, if that had been Mr. Carpenter and he had found you—but we won't waste time talking about it. We mustn't lose one minute. I must tell you what I want and you must think whether you can do it—that is always the way people do who advertise for help—isn't it? Never mind answering, because it will just take time and we haven't a second to spare. But you see it is this way; we were in Berlin at the Bristol—were you ever there?—such a nice hotel, isn't it?—and baths for nothing. It's the only place in Europe where you can wash for nothing—that and Hillman's in Bremen, and the Hotel Heck in Gerolstein—only someone told me the other day that they charge for baths at Hillman's now. But I must hurry—where was I? Oh, yes, so we were in Berlin, and Tiny—that's my sister—took it into her head to get her things in Vienna, and she knew Mr. Carpenter wouldn't like it—he often doesn't like Tiny's ways anyway. He says she isn't a bit like me—and so she went off without saying a word to him, and left us all her extra trunks and her hat-box of Summer hats and the dog and everything, and when Mr. Carpenter woke up he was really vexed indeed; and when he found out about the trunks he was angry, and when he found out about the dog he was awfully mad, and then Tiny had taken Madame with her—because of course she couldn't go alone, and she had taken Nita, too, because she can't do her own hair or hook up her back, and Antonio, because he

always sees to everything when we travel. And that left us in Berlin without Madame and me without Nita, and I can't hook up my back any more than Tiny can hers; and it left us all without Antonio, and he's so useful, and with the dog—Mr. Carpenter just despises the dog—and he can't shave himself—Antonio always shaves him, and—oh, well, I haven't time to go into all the details but—"

She paused abruptly, listened with her head on one side, and then, before Dagobert had time even to gauge what was to come by the light of the past, there was a second cry, a second shove, and he found himself back with the maid again just as the hall door creaked on its hinges.

This time he felt really out of patience with his own folly, for he had to surmise that something very out of the way indeed was forming itself about him.

A man's voice sounded in the next room. The maid, looking somewhat distressed, motioned him to sit down. There seemed nothing else to do, so he sat down, wondering what would happen to him next. The man's voice continued to rumble indistinctly in the next room, and the listener listened acutely and wondered if he were really destined ever to see Hanover again. And yet there blent with his anxieties the oddest possible sentiment of resignation as to seeing the thing through.

Five minutes passed, during which the voices in the next room rose and fell and the man's alternated with Mrs. Carpenter's in what appeared to be, on the whole, a reasonably even basis. Then a door closed and the next instant that of the bedroom opened, and Mrs. Carpenter looked in, smiling.

"What a dear, patient fellow you are," she said to Dagobert. "I'm awfully sorry to treat you this way, but you see I've been through so much with Mr. Carpenter this week that I can't help being wretchedly nervous. Come back now and I won't waste another minute, for there honestly isn't another minute to waste."

Dagobert came into the other room

and started slightly at its changed appearance.

"You see that wasn't Mr. Carpenter," said Mrs. Carpenter pleasantly; "it was the laundryman. I had to check the list because Louise can't speak German. She wouldn't know what a *Leibchen* is, and the man wouldn't know what a *jupon* was, so of course I come in for the whole list." She glanced around at the white piles which covered every piece of furniture in the room and then shrugged her shoulders. "Isn't our laundry something terrific?—all in one week, too. But a lot of those skirts and things are Tiny's—they aren't all mine, by any means. Just put that pile of blouses on the trunk over there and sit down again. I wanted to tell you that it was the laundryman, but I thought if I opened the door and he saw you he would surely think you looked queer, and one doesn't like to have things look queer, you know. And people in Europe are so ready to think queer things. Not but what I think an American laundryman would think you looked funny in there with *Félice*."

Dagobert refrained from answering this last observation. He felt strongly that his time to talk had not yet come. He picked up the blouses and laid them on the trunk as commanded, and then he sat down again. Mrs. Carpenter did likewise and looked at her watch.

"Oh, heavens," she said, "it's 'most half-past three, and he only drove to the Galgenberg. He'll really be here any minute now. I *must* hurry. Where was I, anyhow?"

"In Berlin," volunteered Dagobert.

"Was I? Oh, thank you so much. Well, we couldn't stay in Berlin, of course, because of ever so many things, and I couldn't shop with Tiny in Vienna (Tiny and I are twins; don't you think Mr. Carpenter might let us shop together anyhow?) I did want to go to Paris. Paris is such a good place to shop, you know. And I am having a lot—an awful lot—of Winter clothes made there; but do you know, Mr. Carpenter was so vexed over Antonio, and he kept getting more vexed and

then only last Friday he suddenly remembered that a steamer sails from Bremen every week, and he had them telegraph and get rooms for us on tomorrow's boat, and he says we are to go to Bremen tomorrow morning and sail from there tomorrow afternoon! He never told me until yesterday on the train when I thought we were really on the train going straight for Paris, and you cannot imagine how desperate I felt. The more I felt the more desperate I felt, and some of our trunks went on without us and that made it worse yet.

"I have some skirts without waists and hats that don't match shoes, and the dog has only his little black jacket, and all the umbrellas were left in the train. How can we get those things home without paying duty if we don't have them with us? And then there are my things being made in Paris—I declare I was half-mad all last night with thinking of it and about one o'clock I couldn't think of it any longer, so I just got up and rang for the waiter and I wrote an advertisement and had it— Mercy on us!"

An awful rap at the door!

There was no time to put Dagobert anywhere, for the door opened at the same instant.

It is impossible to detail any of the sensations which took place in the room during the brief space of time that it took to open the door; but when the door was opened nothing more formidable appeared than a hand, holding out four letters on a plate, this being the usual way in which mail is delivered into the rooms at the Wienerhof.

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Carpenter, as she went to get the letters, "I'm afraid he thought something queer or he'd have come in all over. But never mind, we haven't time to discuss appearances. Two or three more scares *can't* happen without one's being Mr. Carpenter, and if Mr. Carpenter does come——"

She went back to the sofa and knotted herself thereon again in what Dagobert was fain to consider as her favorite attitude.

"Now we must talk real seriously,"

she said, looking earnestly across at him; "now comes *your* part. I can see you're a gentleman, and you must have some reason for thinking you're original or you wouldn't have answered the advertisement. So I want you to see if you can't see a way out for me. I simply *can't* go to Bremen tomorrow—I have *got* to go to Paris. Mr. Carpenter *must* be kept from sailing from Bremen and you *must* be the one to keep him. It's got to be you because you are the only gentleman who has come—I've to trust you are original—I hope you are. Do you think you are?"

She paused, and Dagobert had his first real chance to speak since he had entered the room. He sat dumb in the face of it. He felt thoroughly and completely done up. For the nonce he did not know whether he was dead or alive—awake or dreaming.

"Well," said Mrs. Carpenter, "surely you aren't going back on me? Where did you see the advertisement, anyhow?"

"In a Hanover paper," said Dagobert dry-throatedly.

"Well, of course, I didn't advertise in any other papers; but I mean where were you yourself?"

"In Hanover," said Dagobert.

Mrs. Carpenter looked at him quickly and anxiously.

"Oh, poor me!" she cried. "You sound stupid, and if you really are stupid, what under the sun am I to do?"

There was a real despair and nerve-thrilling appeal in her voice that stung her hearer to the quick. No young man who has hitherto considered himself bright likes to be suddenly confronted with the accusation of stupidity. And Dagobert was also conscious of a mad resentment at having this one woman justified in calling him stupid. Whatever he might have been called by others he would *not* be called stupid by her. Something within him throbbed and pulsed as nothing had ever throbbed or pulsed before. He felt it, prayed that it was the genius of originality, and under its impulse

sprang to the defense of—Mrs. Carpenter.

"Don't worry," he begged passionately; "leave all to me. I'll help you out or die helping."

"How?" she asked.

"I'll see."

He hadn't an idea what he was going to do, but he knew that he was going to do something. She looked at him and her eyes widened and shone in a strangely attractive manner.

"Oh, I'm so glad," she exclaimed; "I know you can help me. But you'll want money," she added quickly. "You must be poor or you wouldn't have come, you know."

"That's true," said Dagobert promptly. "I lost my letter of credit this morning."

"Oh, never mind making up any story as to why you're poor," said Mrs. Carpenter easily; "we know just how it is. Mr. Carpenter lent money to seven Americans who had lost their letters of credit just in the little while that we were in Berlin—and to nineteen who could pay him back the instant they reached Paris. Nobody's ever really poor in Europe."

"I hope to heaven I'm not," Dagobert laughed; "but I really can't see where it's gone, so I'm awfully afraid that I am."

She looked at him quickly and concernedly.

"There, now, I'm afraid I hurt your feelings," she said; "but I didn't mean to. And you mustn't let Mr. Carpenter know you're without money or he'll take a dislike to you. He lent some money to an American with inflammatory rheumatism, in one place where we were, and it turned out that the man was only intoxicated and they'd taken away his money so that he couldn't buy anything to drink. He had delirium tremens just because Mr. Carpenter had given him that money, and so now he won't give even a beggar a penny. I want him to think you're rich; how much would it take to make a man rich for one day, do you think?"

"Nothing," said Dagobert. "You can do it on credit."

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Carpenter. "Mr. Carpenter isn't that kind. You can't do anything with him on credit—you must really spend money. I'll give you a thousand marks, shall I?"

"All right," said Dagobert—who was beginning to feel himself more and more enthused with what he took to be the spirit of the hour; "give me the thousand marks and I'll take a room and—" He hesitated; he knew there was a phrase which should come in here, but it was a moment before he could think of it; then it came to him. "Leave all to me," he said in a tone the assurance of which astonished even himself.

"Remember, you have only tonight and tomorrow morning," said Mrs. Carpenter. "Whatever do you suppose you can do?"

"I don't know," said Dagobert; "I'll begin by consulting the head waiter—they always have ideas."

"It's no use trying to make him ill," said Mrs. Carpenter. "I could have done that myself, but he'll go even if he's carried. I thought, too, of locking him up in the Andreaskirche—they're very obliging about letting one have the key alone—but Mr. Carpenter isn't the man to stay locked up anywhere. He'd break a window and get right out."

"They'd arrest him climbing out," said Dagobert; "not for climbing out, you know, but for breaking the window."

"Oh, no, they wouldn't," said Mrs. Carpenter; "he never gets arrested. He looks as if he was somebody incognito, and they don't dare bother the incognitos in countries with kings. It's so different from a republic, where incognitos are only called aliases, you know."

"But a restored church window?" he reminded her.

"It wouldn't make any difference with Mr. Carpenter—he just walks across tracks and gets off trains anywhere and does what he pleases. He was raised so. They spoiled him. You'll see."

Dagobert opened his mouth to reply, but just at that instant the door opened and in walked Mr. Carpenter!

II

It was the most natural thing under the sun, considering the circumstances, that Dagobert should have felt his heart give a sudden leap.

Even as it leapt its owner rose to face Mr. Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter was a large, imposing-looking man with pompadour hair, fierce round eyes, the mustache of a trooper, and the imperial of the third Napoleon. He was carefully and correctly attired, had a silk hat in his left hand and a heavy, knotted walking-stick in his right. There was absolutely nothing omitted from his appearance that could have further borne out his ideal portrait as sketched toward the end of the last chapter.

Dagobert dared not look at Mrs. Carpenter; he felt more inclined to throw himself in front of her. He didn't stop to think why, but if he had he would probably have called it chivalry, a name which the Middle Ages coined at a time when men on horseback were accustomed to find expression for their feelings before they had time to get down. *They* called it chivalry, and Dagobert would probably have done the same—just at that moment.

Mr. Carpenter stood looking to left and right with a fierce military glance, for an extremely long quarter of a minute. Dagobert remained erect directly opposite him, and Mrs. Carpenter continued sitting upon the sofa. She looked more puzzled than frightened—in fact, she did not appear frightened at all. After a little her husband put his hat upon the table and announced with equal brevity and emphasis:

"I've lost the dog!"

His wife clapped her hands.

"Oh, goody!" she exclaimed. "How pleased Félice will be. Only," her tone altered sadly, "what a pity that she had just washed him! She so hates to wash him." Then she looked at Dagobert, and he fancied a certain helplessness in her glance, in spite of the outward composure.

He also felt a sort of tightening all through his nervous system; the mo-

ment had evidently come to introduce him. Of course Mrs. Carpenter knew not his name nor one thing about him; he felt all breathlessness to see how she would extricate them both from so dire a mire.

But she was equal to the hour.

"Oh, Mr. Carpenter," she said in a tone that was a triumph of blithesomeness, all things considered, "this is a gentleman whom Tiny begged to call on us if he ran across us, Prince—Prince—what *did* you say your name was?" she interrupted, turning to Dagobert. "You know how hard it is for us to pronounce Russian."

Dagobert's mentality swung around with a swing of which only some other ardent admirer of the Japanese can measure the force. A Russian! He! Great heavens!

Then self-control—he called it that—came to his aid, and he bowed a bow that he had learned one time in a minuet given for charity, and said:

"Dagobert Henryvich, of New Polsk—at your service."

He looked at Mrs. Carpenter as he regained an upright position, and divined by the light in her eyes that he had done well, but that they were both probably in for it now.

Mr. Carpenter covered the intervening floor space in two steps and shook hands warmly with his caller.

"My sympathy is with you," he said; "sit down."

Dagobert sat down helplessly. Mrs. Carpenter remained perched as usual in the corner of the sofa. Mr. Carpenter sat down, too.

"He saw Tiny in Dresden," said Mrs. Carpenter, evidently feeling that explanations *à trois* would be wisest. "She was just going down and he was just coming through. She sent her love to us all."

"I hope she was quite well?" Mr. Carpenter asked with some latent grimness. "I needn't inquire if she was enjoying herself, I know."

"I had the pleasure of being with her only for a very few minutes," said Dagobert with tremendous caution. "You see, we were both travelers."

"Yes, the most of your class of Russians are traveling just now, if I understand things rightly," said the husband. "By the way, though, do you know you are the first Russian I ever met that I've ever really liked the looks of? They're generally too black and curly for me. But you might be an American for all your looks say."

"I am often taken for an American," Dagobert confessed; "it pleases me very much."

"I should think it would," said Mr. Carpenter. "If I were Russian I'd be very pleased to be taken for anything—even a Chinaman—these days."

"This is no time for me to begin to show spirit," thought Dagobert, and tried to look meek over so strong a thrust at the country to which he was supposed to belong.

"I told you I lost the dog, didn't I?" Mr. Carpenter said, now turning to Mrs. Carpenter. "I told you this noon at dinner that I bet I could do it if anyone could, and now I've done it."

"How did you do it?" she asked with real interest.

"Oh, I kept a sharp eye out and took an alley home. This is a great place for alleys," he continued, turning to Dagobert; "you can find them anywhere, and the difference between these and the French ones is that in Germany they're all short cuts, while in France they're all stopped up at the other end."

"I should have thought that the dog could have traced you," Dagobert said.

"He wasn't smart enough," said Mr. Carpenter. "He's one of those fool dogs that women exhibit in shows and that look like mongrels on the street."

"The prince had only just come in when you did," said Mrs. Carpenter now, "and I do wish you'd ask him if he's staying here long?"

"No, I'm staying here only a short time," said Dagobert. "I'm going on tomorrow."

"Where?" she asked, and then stared because Mr. Carpenter looked so very peculiar.

"Don't I hear the dog?" he asked. Someone rapped, and when they

cried "*Herein!*" it was the *Oberkellner*, fairly radiating joy, with the dog in his arms.

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Carpenter distressedly, "you ought to have told him that you didn't want him found."

At that the dog's owner rose abruptly and quitted the room. The instant the door closed Dagobert felt himself irresistibly drawn toward Mrs. Carpenter—he thought now that it was because he did not wish to be overheard, and that was reason enough to satisfy him for the present. As a matter of fact, the effect of having seen her husband was so overpowering that he was conscious of a strange craving to fly out of the window with her forthwith. But he only moved his chair a little—a very little—toward her sofa.

"Why *did* you make me a Russian prince?" he asked hurriedly and despairingly. "Of all things on the face of the earth!"

"I couldn't think of anything to say," she replied in a hurry and despair quite equaling his own, "and you see I never hesitate and never stutter, so what could I do? I had to say something right off."

"But how can I live up to it?" Dagobert felt impelled to demand.

"If you fail me I'll never forgive you!" she declared, and her tone thrilled him with a sentiment which he now had no doubt was the common manifestation of strength succoring weakness.

There was a second's silence, and a sound to be heard in the hall.

"As soon as he comes back I'll get me a room and go straight to work," he said with vigor.

"You'll have to work very hard and very fast," she declared with conviction; then she rose quickly and went into the other room, returning almost at once with a roll of bills in her hand.

"There!" she said, "there's a thousand marks. Spend it royally—but *right* royally—and—do all you can for me. You will, won't you?"

She gave him her hand, a slim little bit of a white one, at the same time that she gave him the money.

"I'll poison him if there's no other way," thought Dagobert, and sentiments of what he now took to be manly heroism surged as the immediate result of her finger-tips up through his arm and from thence all over him. For one brief second he continued to hold her hand, and then he loosed it and felt weak and dizzy.

"Trust me," he said rather thickly and indistinctly, "and—au revoir."

"Au revoir," she told him very sweetly; and then he went out and fell over a man who was laying down carpet in the hall, because he was for the moment completely blinded to all things other than the new emotion that had suddenly passed out of any known index to the feelings to which he had been hitherto wont. He reached the stair in some shape and descended to the office where reigned a peace sweet, complete and entire, and in the office—which was synonymous with that same small, square medieval, little entrance-hall—he paused to pull himself together.

In the general confusion of all his thoughts, ideals and principles, only one fact stood out prominently enough to be grasped; that was that if Mrs. Carpenter wanted him to do anything he was going to do it or die in the attempt. Having laid strong hold of that first promise he ventured to lean a little further, and the next proposition—i.e., what Mrs. Carpenter wanted done, came upon him much as a landslide might have come upon John the Baptist. In fact, Dagobert felt desperately done up when he faced a clock that said four and knew that within eighteen hours he must, alone and single-handed—

Just then in walked the head waiter, roseate and beaming as usual, and at the sight of his jocund countenance our friend immediately recollected how he had told Mrs. Carpenter that head waiters always could be counted upon in times of stress. He knew also that it was true, so he launched himself upon the *Oberkellner* of the Wienerhof at once, beginning by asking him if there was a vacant bedroom to be had in the

house. The *Oberkellner* walked directly to the blackboard, where every one of the guests was neatly chalked opposite room numbers, and offered him No. 45—just beside Mrs. Carpenter. Dagobert shook his head at No. 45, so he next offered him No. 46, just opposite Mrs. Carpenter. But Dagobert also shaking his head at No. 46, the *Oberkellner* told him with a shade of regret veiling his whilom sunshine that then he would have to go on the next floor or at the other end of the house.

The regret was so unfeigned that Dagobert would certainly have noticed it had he not been so preoccupied with what he now thought was preoccupation. He wondered whether, all things considered, he would not be wisest at once to confide fully in the head waiter; so he gave him ten marks and told him that although Mr. Carpenter thought that he was a Russian prince he really was not one at all. The *Oberkellner* smiled broadly at this and said he quite understood. Dagobert thought that of course he didn't, but as a matter of fact he really understood a good deal better than the young man himself. It isn't necessary to give a European head waiter ten marks to make him understand situations like the one with which we are now dealing. However, Dagobert didn't know enough about the situation himself to be able to size it up alone and unaided, so after the ice had been properly broken in his estimation he went on a little further, told his real name, and then took No. 4 as an American while he was marked on the blackboard as plain Dagobert Henryvich; and it must be confessed that it stood out drolly between Herr Wonnebald Linieweber, who had No. 3, and Frl. Pinkapank, who had No. 5.

As soon as that piece of business was concluded the time was at hand when real heroism must at last come to the fore.

"I suppose you can do anything if I pay you enough?" the young man said with an earnestness which was most faltering. The *Oberkellner* bowed and smiled. Dagobert thereupon took a

splendid cigar out of his pocket, presented it in due form, and then made a clean breast of the whole difficulty.

"It will be worth a thousand marks to you if Madame does not have to sail from Bremen tomorrow," he said by way of conclusion. The *Oberkellner* looked fairly startled at the size of the bribe, and then his usual smile returned and slowly overspread his face.

"Gracious sir, I must ask a little time to consider," he said almost in a tone of awe. The awe mixed oddly with the smile, and Dagobert wondered if the mixture was auspicious.

"Do you think that you can manage it?" he asked.

"Gracious sir, I must think, but I will say that I believe all things possible."

Dagobert looked at him squarely and liked his face; there was no one else to turn to or trust in, anyhow.

"Oh, by the way," he said then, "I suppose there is a private dining-room here?"

"Yes, certainly."

It occurred to the young man that it would be most delightful—and courteous—to give a little supper to his new friends that very night, so he placed that commission also with the useful *Oberkellner*, despatched a note above with the invitation, and then, remembering that he had come from Hanover with no more than the clothes upon him, felt it necessary to go out and do a little shopping without delay.

The *Oberkellner's* plan seemed to be assuming some favorable shape, judging from the fervor with which he urged a walk upon the guest. Dagobert secured some explicit directions as to where to go and set out at once, confident in his ability not only to get to the shops desired but also to return to the hotel in due time. But streets and turns in Hildesheim are more than a little confusing, and by the time that he had visited the third place he was so completely puzzled that he had to confess himself quite astray, and one or two more unexpected twists in a street which was uniform in nothing but its name brought him up standing in what

was evidently some other division of the city.

He was in a great irregular oval of overhanging houses, and looked up at the tremendous Gothic church that filled the middle of the space. It struck him as quite the most imposing sight that he had ever seen, partly because its side walls presented such huge spreads of unrelieved stone work, and partly because it so completely dwarfed the seven- and eight-story steep-pitched roofs of the sixteenth-century structures surrounding it.

As he stood looking up an organ burst out, and the solemn melody flooded the old square with a sort of soul-sunshine. It was wonderful—it was sublime. It fitted oddly in with some new birth that seemed to have taken place for him that day. He did not just know what or where or how or why, but the music seemed to know and seemed to be bearing the whole burden of a mighty secret in the conscious strength of its diapason. He bowed his head as if he were within the church—a worshiper before its shrine, and he felt his whole being flooded with a new resolve, a new desire. After a little the music ceased and then he slowly lifted his head and there, right before him, appearing also much affected by the solemnity of the music, was Mrs. Carpenter.

She had on a gray-blue walking-suit the color of her eyes, and a hat with a bluebird standing on his head just over her left ear, also a white boa and a white muff that ended in foxes' heads and tails artistically combined. She looked most charming, and she also looked straight up at him.

"I saw you coming in here," she said pleasantly, "and so I followed. I thought that maybe you were thinking of the Andreaskirche. That's it, you know, and the museum is in the front half; but oh, dear, it never will do to try and look him up in there. You see there isn't time for one thing. It really isn't practical—take my word for it."

Dagobert thought that even in the face of her informality it would be

more the proper thing to take off his hat and shake hands, so he did. She had on a little glove of thinnest kid, and her hand was as soft and warm as a baby squirrel. He felt the organ—although it had ceased playing—thrill him all over again as he held her fingers and mighty longings to—to do *anything* for her went through him.

"Is this the Andreaskirche?" he asked, astonished at how sensible his voice sounded; and then, "Why, do you know I was lost—I didn't know what church it was, or where I was—I didn't really."

"Didn't you?" she asked, surprised. "I thought you came here on purpose to consider its feasibility. But it really isn't feasible. He must be kept in some way that doesn't look on purpose. If you arrange a way that looks on purpose he will never forgive me, and that wouldn't do, you know."

Something in her phrasing sent a dart of misery through Dagobert, who—not knowing what ailed him—thought that it was the frosty stones of the Andreaskirche, and suggested walking on.

"Let us talk about something else," he said. "You are to dine with me tonight—did you know that?"

"Oh, yes," she said; "the note came just as I was leaving. It will be awfully jolly—but *awfully* jolly."

"I most sincerely hope so," said he heartily; "but don't you think that it would be wise to seize this opportunity to post me up a bit? Couldn't we take a little walk together and—and talk, you know?"

She seemed ready to meet his proposal half-way, and they turned and walked out of the square into a street which would have seemed narrow only that it kept on growing more so.

"Have you been over long?" he asked presently, falling back on the tamest thing that one can say in Europe, just because his tongue felt itself so beset with a crush of questions.

"A year. You see, we've had such a dreadful time with Tiny—Tiny's my sister. We didn't mean to stay so long, but Tiny never seems ready to go home. But now Mr. Carpenter has

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gotten tired of waiting, and he says Tiny must be in Bremen tomorrow or come alone. He's awfully good about Tiny—always lets her do just what she pleases—but *just* what she pleases. I must say that for him—he's awfully good, as a general rule. But, of course, Tiny can't sail from Bremen tomorrow when she's in Vienna and thinks we're on our way to Paris. She has Madame and Nita and Antonio with her, and she knows she's all safe and she doesn't mean to hurry. Of course we all know her ways, but that's why I want to keep him in some pleasant way that looks like an accident, if I possibly can, instead of vexing him. You see, he might be really very, very cross with me otherwise. Of course he hasn't the call to keep me good-tempered that he has Tiny—I've got to be good-tempered."

Dagobert felt the same sharp dart of misery again.

"What is that?" he asked, looking up at a quaint, old building because he felt that looking down would make him feel worse somehow.

"It's the Rolandstift—it's Plate B-2."

"Plate B-2!"

"Yes, in the Baedeker. You see, since Tiny took Antonio I have to look them all out in the Baedeker for Mr. Carpenter, and so I learn them all by heart—but by heart." She nodded her head, laughing, and he found her quaint little "but" and the emphasis that followed it the prettiest trick of speech that he had ever heard.

"What does 'stift' mean?" he asked, pausing on the narrow stone sidewalk and continuing to stare up at the queer structure opposite. He thought that he wanted to study the wood carvings in the oblong spaces over doors and windows, but perhaps the fact that he had stopped his companion by catching hold of her arm had something to do with his interest.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Carpenter, looking upward, too; "ever so many things are 'stifts' over here—but just ever so many. Rich men did it all the time. I like all carvings, don't you?

I like that nice little one of Delilah and Samson in the corner—the way he lays smash up against her knee while she takes his hair off in square blocks."

"The next one is nice, too," said Dagobert. He still had hold of her arm and was astonished to feel a real understanding of the art of the Middle Ages enveloping him more and more.

"That's Samson and the gates of—but of what?" asked Mrs. Carpenter.

"Of Sodom and Gomorrah, of course," said Dagobert promptly. "Don't you remember, first he went out in the desert and rent them apart and then he carried them off?"

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Carpenter pleasantly, "of course. And there he goes with one under each arm straight up the hill. And that next one," she continued; "that must be that man that the gourd grew—it *was* a gourd, wasn't it?" She hesitated and looked at Dagobert, who felt all his Bible history leap to her help.

"It didn't grow—it withered," he said. "It's withering there; see the flowers hanging down."

"Is a gourd a flower?" asked Mrs. Carpenter. "I thought you could fill them with water."

Dagobert pressed her arm a little to set her walking again; he felt that he was come to the end of his scriptural rope.

"Let's see the other side!" he suggested sweetly.

They walked around the corner.

"We really ought to be discussing Mr. Carpenter," said Mrs. Carpenter; "we really ought, you know."

"I am thinking of him all the time," said Dagobert. "I shall manage, don't fear; it's all planned already."

"Not really?" cried his companion, pausing short.

"Yes, really. Won't you believe me? Don't you feel that you can trust me?"

"I want to trust you," said she, looking up at him in a way that flooded him with want and trust, "but I'm afraid that, being only a man, you don't appreciate how tremendously important it is that I get to Paris. Do

you mean to say that you really and truly have got it all arranged already—but *already?*”

Dagobert felt the need of a little evasion.

“I know what Paris means to women,” he said. “I’ve been to Paris myself.”

“For clothes?” Her tone was indescribable.

“No, but with women who wanted clothes.”

She drew a quick, sharp breath.

“Are you *married?*” she cried, in a frightened tone.

Dagobert felt absolutely permeated with joy at the fright in her tone.

“No, no,” he hastened to assure her, “no, *indeed*. I was in Paris with my mother and sisters.”

“Oh!” said Mrs. Carpenter. She went on then slowly. “That’s the Kaiserhaus,” she said in a perfunctory tone presently; “it’s Plate B-2.” Then she added, “I’m so glad.”

“But why?” asked Dagobert.

“Because those heads are all Roman emperors.”

“I don’t mean that. I mean why are you glad that I am not married?”

She glanced at him briefly.

“I don’t like married men,” she said; “they never are nice. Look at Mr. Carpenter! And unmarried men!”—she hugged her muff abruptly to her bosom, “oh, they *are* so nice!” she looked up at him out of the corners of her changeable blue eyes; “but unmarried men are *so* nice,” she added. “Why, you should have seen Mr. Carpenter before he was married. He was that good to Tiny and me—but that good!”

Dagobert was silently conscious of a crushing sensation within him. They were coming out on a boulevard that stretched invitingly away.

“He’s very good to Tiny yet,” Mrs. Carpenter continued; “of course that goes without saying. But he’s that strict with me—but that strict!”

Dagobert looked at the inviting boulevard and then his conscience rose up with overpowering force and made him take out his watch.

“What time is it?” his companion asked.

“Ten minutes past five.”

“Oh,” her tone was deliciously sad and regretful, “then we must go back—mustn’t we?”

“I am afraid so.”

“If Mr. Carpenter was *only* German!” she sighed.

“How would that help?” he asked.

“Why, he’d be taking his coffee in some café now and we could stay out and walk along this lovely boulevard.”

Dagobert felt his senses swimming upward in a liquid sea of joy. She was so entrancingly, surpassingly delightful—and she wanted to stay with him!—oh, the lovely, fascinating, adorable—he sighed for more adjectives to conquer.

“Can’t we walk a little further, anyway?” he suggested.

But she shook her head.

“I’m afraid not,” she said. “You see, he doesn’t take a nap before supper, but——”

“But——?”

“But that is only half the difficulty. He doesn’t sleep, but——”

“But——?”

“I do.”

She laughed outright then—and hugged her muff up to her bosom and laughed again.

“And what will Dagobert Henryvich do when you desert him?” asked the young man.

“Oh, you must entertain Mr. Carpenter—you can go out and walk with him next. And remember, whatever you do, don’t make him mad. Let him have his way in little things like the Baltic Fleet and the Democratic party—Tiny and I always do—but always.”

“Oh, I can do that easily enough,” said Dagobert; “I’ve knocked about so much that I’m thoroughly cosmopolitan—have neither patriotism, principles nor morals left.”

“But you have feelings about the New York Custom House left—haven’t you?” Mrs. Carpenter said earnestly. “You surely haven’t outlived *those*—have you?”

"No," said Dagobert with emphasis, "I wouldn't be human if I ever got where I liked being welcomed home by the treatment accorded us there."

"Poor Tiny had four lovely dresses spoiled," said Mrs. Carpenter sadly. "They spread them out on the dock, and it was so wet. Tiny cried."

"Let's change the subject!" said Dagobert grimly.

Mrs. Carpenter sighed sadly. "Yes, let's," she said mournfully.

They walked along, sometimes in the street and sometimes on the sidewalk, according to which had the most room to walk on.

"I suppose I shall have a hard time being a Russian just at present," said Dagobert. "Lucky my overcoat is hall-marked Paris."

"You can say you were educated in France," said Mrs. Carpenter. "You can say anything you please—nobody is very clear about Russian facts, you know."

"I'll fall back heavy on my relatives," said Dagobert. "Russians always have tons of relatives. I'll lug mine in by the ears or any old way."

"Yes, do," said Mrs. Carpenter simply.

"And you will trust me, won't you?" said Dagobert. "I promise you, you shall not go from Bremen tomorrow—I promise," he added, with great fervency.

"I believe you," she replied earnestly; then she laughed. "It's so jolly meeting you," she said. "When I advertised I really thought I wanted someone for Mr. Carpenter. But it seems as if I'm taking you all myself."

Dagobert felt a sharp thrust which was so sharp that whether it was pain or joy he could not tell.

They went quickly along the Hoherweg past Löser's, and Hartwig's, and Hornthal's, and all the other curious names, and he had so much ado to follow the ins and outs of his companion's footsteps that they said not a word until, turning to him at the Platz, she remarked, "After supper what shall you and Mr. Carpenter do?"

"Oh, dear," said Dagobert, stepping

over a dog and out for a woman, "must it be Mr. Carpenter, too, after supper?"

"You can interest him, I know," she said, smiling gaily. "He isn't a bit the usual American—he's deeply interested in Europe and he'll like to hear your side of the war. He didn't approve of the peace at all—he says war is one of Nature's principles."

"I suppose there wouldn't be standing room on the globe if Mr. Roosevelt had his own way all around," said Dagobert, laughing.

Mrs. Carpenter laughed, too.

"I read an article once on how if David hadn't killed Goliath, but had let him settle down to domestic life, we'd have two billion living giants among us today," she said.

"I'm glad he killed him," said Dagobert decidedly.

"Why?"

"Because I like to look big myself."

They turned in the door of the Wienerhof and saw the head waiter standing smiling under the clock.

The clock said twenty-five minutes past five.

"I must run," exclaimed Mrs. Carpenter—and ran at once.

Dagobert paused behind.

"Well, have you thought it all out?" he asked the head waiter.

"Yes, gracious sir, I have thought—I am still thinking. "You may rely upon all being done as you wish."

"How will you manage?"

The beneficence of the head waiter's smile became enigmatic.

"The details must be arranged later," he said. "I only ask the gracious sir to trust implicitly."

"Makes me think of 'pig won't get over the stile,'" thought Dagobert. "I beg her to trust me, the head waiter begs me to trust him—I wonder who in thunder he's turning the job over to."

Then he looked at the man again and was ashamed of himself for conceiving any sentiment other than utter confidence when the beams of that smile were enveloping him in their hope-giving radiance.

"Do your best," he said. "I'll be

most substantially grateful, I swear." Then he hurried to his room.

The purchases which he had made and ordered sent home were already arrived and lying on the table. But he paid no attention to them; he had a good hour and a half, and he threw himself forthwith into a chair and plunged into a bottomless pit of reverie.

Well, here was an adventure—were they blue or gray? Blue?—no, gray. How little idea one ever has what a day may bring forth! . . . Stupid, not to have bought a toilet-bag . . . such long eyelashes, too! . . . How old was she, anyhow? Nineteen—not more. . . . How long could she have been married? A year? not more. . . . Curious; was it for money? . . . Quaint town, Hildesheim! Delightful place to stroll about—she walked so well, too. Odd, how short that hour had been! Getting late, now, though. What under the sun could "*stift*" mean? "Rolandstift"! Droll picture of Samson and Delilah. . . . What a dear little laugh she had! What fun it would be to do the whole town together—she and he! Good idea to go out later that evening. Europe always looked so well by electric light. Why didn't Mr. Carpenter go to sleep after supper? Very good habit for elderly gentlemen. Very . . .

He was interrupted by a tap at the door.

"Herein!" he cried.

It was the *Oberkellner*.

"Gracious sir," he said—and the breadth of the beam passed all belief—"I have found a plan and it will succeed. Give assent to everything, assist the departure in all ways. But rest assured that the most gracious lady will *never* sail tomorrow."

III

THE *Oberkellner's* assurance raised Dagobert to the highest pitch of happiness to which he had ever hitherto attained. He didn't care to know any

of the particulars, he was only too willing to act the part of innocence aiding to speed the parting guest; but *wasn't* it glorious that she wasn't going to have to go since she hadn't wanted to go? And wasn't it more than glorious that he had been the means through which she had attained to that desired end?

He went whistling about his room as he dressed, quite filled with the joyous insouciance of a boy of twelve, and it was only after he had come to the end of the third complete tune that he began to be aware of a shadow lurking behind his happy carelessness. He had been conscious of the same shadow earlier in the day, but the *Oberkellner's* news had overlaid it to the point of forgetfulness for the last brief period. What under the sun was the sense of *his* feeling any blight upon his good spirits now, anyhow? The letter of credit was sure to be found, and in any case its loss had been a blessing in disguise, since it had led to his knowing Mrs. Carpenter. Supposing that he had never lost the letter of credit, or read the morning paper, or known Mrs. Carpenter! Good gracious, it was all too awful to contemplate!

The shadow on his spirits was undoubtedly the close chance which he had run of never knowing Mrs. Carpenter. But he knew her now and he was always going to know her from now on. St. Eloi could fool around Germany as long as the general fooled around France, if he so chose, but Dagobert was going straight back to Paris when the Carpenters went there, and he was going to go straight back to America when they went there, too. The idea of crossing the ocean on their steamer appealed to him mightily. The steamer rolls and people cling to you, you know, and you hold them up, you know, and then sometimes the moon shines and then again it doesn't shine . . .

Dagobert was adjusting his scarf-pin and thinking buoyantly of all sorts of future joys even while he wondered that the insistent shadow never ceased to dog the heels of his dancing hopes. He tried to drive it from him by keeping

his thoughts fixed on the possibilities of nights when the moon did *not* shine, but it was cruelly persistent in its clinging.

Then he went to the window and looked out on the street all crowded with the tide flowing homeward. He felt very strangely—as if there was a lesson in the shadow—a lesson waiting for him to learn. He leaned in the window and was conscious of a certain resolute tightening of all his muscles. For a little he waited tense and rigid, and then he turned from the window and walked up and down the room, his brows drawn together and his arms tightly folded across his bosom. He was fighting hard and he knew that he was fighting hard. All sorts of words and thoughts and speeches tossed up on the foam of his battling. It was inevitable that the truth should finally come out uppermost. He put it from him, remembering his indignation with St. Eloi—his condemnation of the poor little princess of Hanover; he had been well-raised even if his education had been daringly liberal, and he would not admit even to himself that—

Oh, no, no, *no!*

The shadow was close beside him, pressing against his forehead, compressing his heart. My God, it wasn't six hours yet! It couldn't be true! He was conjuring up a spirit to vex himself.

And then he went by the wall, rested his hand against it, clenched his other hand hard, and without knowing what he was saying or doing repeated three times aloud:

"She is a married woman!"

After that he was quiet as if the admission had freed him of a burden, and then he turned about, feeling ages older and wiser and said:

"I must be a good friend to her, but I must not go to Paris with them. It wouldn't be white. She's too sweet." He paused a little after that and then he added, "And I care too much for her."

The wonder of it all was so mighty that he very nearly forgot his supper-party in thinking of it, and then when

he remembered he pulled himself together mightily and put into his new resolves all the fine clean strength that had carried him so often to victory upon the track. The day he was living was forever a marked day in his life, but the marked hour of the day was beyond all question the hour that he spent alone by himself in his own room, thinking.

He went down to the private dining-room a little before seven and found the table laid for three and a bouquet of violets at Mrs. Carpenter's place, just as he had ordered.

His guests arrived five minutes after the hour and he felt to the full effect all that had taken place in his room when he saw the sweet, girlish face again and looked into those deep blue-gray eyes.

"Sorry to be late, prince," said her husband easily, "but I fell asleep over the state of affairs in your country. When you don't blow up some magnate it makes the daily news seem so awfully tame, don't you know?"

Dagobert gladly seized this clue out of the somewhat labyrinthian situation; there is nothing so amusing as lying your way out of difficulties when you know yourself to be in other and deeper difficulties out of which there seems no way.

"They blew up two of my cousins last week," he said, "and shot one, and drowned four," he added, pulling out Mrs. Carpenter's chair as he spoke.

"Oh, I say!" said Mr. Carpenter, sticking his glass in his eye, "you aren't serious?"

"Oh, but I am—but what does it matter? Subtract seven princes of New Polsk and it leaves thirty-nine alive. That's a principle of our race which the outside world doesn't seem able to grasp with the right hand."

"No," said Mr. Carpenter a little blankly, "I'm sure it never struck me so before."

Mrs. Carpenter sat down in her chair and Dagobert slid her into place. Mr. Carpenter sat down. Dagobert sat down. The waiter began to serve them and everything was hot and well-cooked. For was it not the Wienerhof?

"Now this is really great," said Mr. Carpenter heartily. "So nice to meet someone speaking English, you know. And you do really speak it uncommonly well, you know," he added; "your English master must have caught you young."

"He did," said Dagobert, "very young; fact is, I was born in England. My father was minister-extraordinary there, fixing up the affairs of the Crimea."

"Surely not of the Crimea!" exclaimed Mrs. Carpenter.

"Oh, well, of the Charge of Bala-klava then," said Dagobert readily, "or maybe it was the Indian Mutiny. Anyway, he was there, so I came there first."

Mr. Carpenter put his glass in his eye, but, the waiter bringing the soup just then, let his glass fall and picked up his soup-spoon instead.

"Isn't it good?" said Mrs. Carpenter. "I'm so hungry. I love to be hungry and then eat."

"That's a glad hearing for your host," said the young man; "it's always nice to dine with people who are hungry." He smiled straight at her as he spoke. He meant to be brave and he was being brave—but it was hard. She was being brave—but it was hard. She returned the smile in full—oh, that made it so much harder!

"And that dear little waiter," she said; "isn't he cunning? He brought up my breakfast this morning and I thought he was part of a dream."

"I didn't," said Mr. Carpenter; "waiters and dreams never blend with me. But when are you going back to Russia?" he asked Dagobert. "I should think your unhappy land needed all able-bodied men these days."

"Oh, dear, no," said Dagobert; "the more sense a Russian has the further he goes just now. You ought to see that it's the only sensible course to pursue in the circumstances. The more a man wants to help, the further away he must get before beginning."

"I suppose that's really a fact," said Mr. Carpenter, "but—patriotism, don't you know, and all that?"

"Oh, patriotism doesn't go down with me even a little bit," said Dagobert. "When my countrymen dynamited my grandfather I ceased to feel patriotic."

"Dynamited your grandfather!" cried Mr. Carpenter.

"He was killed with the martyr-emperor," said Dagobert calmly. He helped himself to pepper as he spoke.

"I thought only the coachman was killed!"

"He was the coachman."

"The coachman!"

"It's a hereditary dignity in our family; when the Czar feels uneasy he always calls on a prince of New Polsk to drive him."

"Great heavens!" said Mr. Carpenter.

"That's the only thing that will ever take me back to Russia," said Dagobert. "If I'm called on to drive my Czar out, I must and shall obey. But why don't we get something else to eat?" he said. "Soup is always regarded as a starter only."

Just then the waiter came in with a dish called on the menu the German equivalent of "fricasseed calf." It was developed under the form of stewed veal. It wasn't what had been ordered, but it proved to be a sort of extra entrée served in addition to the selected menu.

"I like these German dishes," said Mr. Carpenter, plunging into it at once. "I detest veal in America."

"All men do," said Mrs. Carpenter, "but I wish I had some chow-chow to eat with this."

"There," said Mr. Carpenter, laying down knife and fork and staring abruptly around, "there—that's the thorough-paced American spirit for you. Wants steam heat in the fjords of Norway, ice-water in Gerolstein and chow-chow here. I tell you, the moderns who deserve halos are Cook & Sons, who tour shoals of the discontented about year after year."

"I don't often want things," protested Mrs. Carpenter; "just compare me with Tiny!"

"Tiny and you are two different

propositions," said Mr. Carpenter. "I am obliged to humor Tiny."

Mrs. Carpenter opened her mouth a bit and then shut it; Dagobert felt such a sympathy for the opening and such an admiration for the shutting that he wanted to grab a sword, fly anywhere, and fight anyone for—chow-chow.

"But really—" he commenced.

"Prince," said Mr. Carpenter, beginning to eat again, "excuse my showing feeling, but I came over a year ago with one lady, a maid, six trunks and seven small pieces of luggage. Since then I have accumulated a companion, a sister-in-law, a courier, a second maid, that dog I lost today, eleven more trunks, fifteen more pieces of small luggage, a physician, a trained nurse, a nurse and a baby—do you wonder I take fire at allusions to chow-chow?"

Dagobert's fork went down on the floor.

"And a baby!" he cried blankly.

"And a baby," said Mr. Carpenter firmly.

Dagobert looked helplessly at Mrs. Carpenter.

"Such a little dear!" she said sweetly.

Poor Dagobert! He had braced himself to bear much, but he certainly had never suspected a baby.

The waiter came in just then, carried off the remains of the fricassee calf, and consulted as to fish.

"There is a fish," said Mr. Carpenter, addressing him in distinctly English German, "that has unexpected bones running all along its lower edge."

"You don't want that kind," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"Yes, I do," said Mr. Carpenter; "it's my favorite fish."

Dagobert felt that in his position as host he had no choice but to forthwith recover from the suddenness of the baby.

"Bring all the kinds of fish you have," he said to the waiter.

"Don't be reckless," said Mrs. Carpenter. "Your country isn't going to pay dividends for a long while, you know."

"I know," said Dagobert, "but my father is the head of the tax-collecting department for Red Russia."

"For Red Russia?"

"Yes; don't you know that Russia is divided by colors? There's Blue Russia, Pink Russia, Lemon Russia, Crushed Strawberry Russia—of course I am translating."

"What a primitive plan!" said Mr. Carpenter.

"We're very primitive," said Dagobert. "Standing where we do on the map we only have our choice of being primitive—or Chinese."

"I expect that's true," said Mr. Carpenter. "You seem to take a very broad standpoint in regard to your country, prince."

"Oh, as to that we all prefer abroad just now," said Dagobert, and then felt ashamed of himself and begged Mrs. Carpenter's pardon. However, Mrs. Carpenter only laughed and Mr. Carpenter complimented the young man again on his ready use of English and then took the compliment back, saying that he had forgotten where he was born for the moment.

The supper wound its happy course along through *Gansebraten* with three kinds of plums and other odd coincidences until they came at last to "wind-bottles"—called in English "cream-puffs"—and coffee. Mr. Carpenter fidgeted over his coffee and asked Mrs. Carpenter if she fully realized that that time tomorrow they would be far out to sea, at which Mrs. Carpenter's face fell so suddenly that she nearly caused Dagobert's coffee-cup to follow suit, he having for the nonce utterly forgotten the seriousness of the situation. Then he found her looking at him and the appeal in her eyes recalled to him the assurance of the head waiter and he smiled reassuringly in his turn.

"What train do you take in the morning?" he asked of Mr. Carpenter.

"The caravan will move at eight o'clock," replied its head. "I suppose," he added to Mrs. Carpenter, "that we to can all get off then."

"I don't know," she said very dubiously.

"Well, we must, anyhow," said her better half, putting his glass to his eye and surveying her as if to size up her moving capabilities. "We have to get to Bremen and from there to Bremerhafen, you know, and the steamer sails at either two or five—I've forgotten which it is on that line."

"Don't you think," said Mrs. Carpenter to Dagobert, "that it's very unfair to call it a line from New York to Bremen, when it really runs between Hoboken and Bremerhafen—two such unattractive places?"

"I do indeed," said Dagobert heartily.

"Well," said Mr. Carpenter, "wherever the line runs to or from, it runs, and we are going on it tomorrow."

"What time does the train leave Hanover?" Dagobert asked.

"I don't know," Mr. Carpenter said. "I'm going to take a cab and go to the station after supper and find out about everything. I always have the courier do it the last thing the night before leaving, and as he isn't along to do it tonight I shall do it myself; I don't allow any changes in time-tables ever to be sprung on me."

"Can't you telephone?"

"Yes, I can, but I'm not going to; I'm going to the steamship office."

"Is there a steamship office in Hildesheim?" Mrs. Carpenter asked of Dagobert.

"It doesn't make any difference whether there is or isn't," said her husband; "I can find out everything at the station, anyhow."

"I don't think that there is a steamship office," said Dagobert in answer to Mrs. Carpenter, "but we can ask the head waiter."

"Kellner," said Mr. Carpenter to a man with two bushes of mustache sprouting fiercely in opposite directions upon his upper lip, who had just come in, "go ask the Herr Oberkellner to come here."

"Yes, gracious sir," replied the bushy one, and disappeared.

The Oberkellner came at once, bland and as ever smiling. His eyes rested on Dagobert and Mrs. Carpenter with a

peculiar beam while he listened attentively to what was asked him.

Alas, no; there was no steamship office in Hildesheim, one communicated with that of Hanover when desiring to obtain steaming information.

Mr. Carpenter surveyed his table companions in a meditative silence.

"I told you so," he said after the head waiter had withdrawn. "Well, I must go down to the station, then. You two can go out to walk if you like—only don't be more than an hour. I'll be back in an hour."

Dagobert felt his heart give a big bound; what magnanimity on the part of a husband!

"Would you like to go to walk?" he asked her, striving to keep his voice even.

"Immensely," she answered.

Mr. Carpenter had risen from the table and was lighting a cigar.

"You tell them to pack up everything this evening," he said to his wife. "Make them all understand that we start at eight tomorrow morning. Don't let there be any mistake. I telegraphed Tiny this afternoon, so that's all off my mind."

"Do you think she'll come?" Mrs. Carpenter asked meekly.

"Well, if she don't, she knows where to get more money when she needs it," said Mr. Carpenter. "I am mainly interested in getting the baby and myself home."

Dagobert had forgotten about the baby in the pressure of the other conversation, and this reminder of its existence gave him a second painful throb.

"Excuse all these domestic details, prince," said Mr. Carpenter; "I must really say good-bye now. Good-bye, Dolly."

Mrs. Carpenter smiled at him and nodded. Then he departed.

"It's awfully silly of him to go away down there," she said, "but he will do it, so it isn't anybody else's blame. And it's rather nice to have him gone—don't you think?"

Dagobert smiled. Mr. Carpenter in going out had left a crack in the door.

The *Oberkellner* came now and tenderly closed the crack.

"What do you suppose he did that for?" asked the young lady. "Perhaps he thinks I'm a nihilist, too."

"No," said Dagobert; "he just wants me to have a chance to tell you that everything is arranged so that you will not have to sail tomorrow."

Her face became positively illumined with joy.

"Really?" she asked.

"Yes, really."

"Who did it—you?"

"No, the head waiter."

"Do you think he can manage it?"

"I think so."

"You can't always rely altogether on a head waiter, can you?"

"You can in Germany," said Dagobert. "A German head waiter is equal to anything."

"How do you think he means to manage?" she asked. She had leaned her elbows on the table, and was supporting her chin upon her intertwined fingers in the favorite American after-coffee pose.

"I don't know," said Dagobert carelessly. "He said leave all to him, and I'm sure I'm only too happy to do so, for it leaves me wholly at leisure to leave everything for you."

He altogether forgot his good resolutions in the fervency of his speech, but Mrs. Carpenter didn't appear to notice; she was knitting her brows.

"He must know a way to keep me from going," she said thoughtfully, "because of course if we all are once upon that train we'll sail—nothing on earth could stop a German train, you know."

Dagobert was obliged to acquiesce there; he did so with a mere motion of his head, saying no word.

"If we are prevented from going," Mrs. Carpenter continued thoughtfully, "Mr. Carpenter will certainly be very, very angry, and I don't want to have to bear it alone. I want Tiny here. I can't do anything with him, but you know how men are once they're married—Tiny can manage him always."

Dagobert felt a warm blaze about his heart, but still said nothing.

"I think," Mrs. Carpenter went on still more slowly, "that I'll telegraph Tiny tonight at Dresden. They'll know at the hotel there whether she's coming or going. If she's on her way to Bremen they'll know where to forward, and if she hasn't left Vienna they'll know that, too. Antonio keeps them posted always."

"Do you think that your sister might be hurrying through to Bremen tonight?" Dagobert asked.

"I haven't an idea," said Mrs. Carpenter frankly. "I know there's a train by Leipzig that stops here; I know that because we came on it once. I can telegraph her to try to be here tomorrow. Then I sha'n't have so very long alone with him after he finds that he's lost the boat."

"Perhaps that might be a good idea," said Dagobert. "Write out the telegram and I'll ring for a waiter and send it at once." He handed her the menu, blank side up and his own fountain-pen as he spoke, and she began to write while he went to ring.

The *Oberkellner* came himself, coughing discreetly outside the door before he opened it. When Dagobert gave him the telegram he smiled even more than usual.

"You think you can manage that we do not go?" Mrs. Carpenter asked of his blandness.

"Most gracious lady, I am perfecting the last details at present. Gracious lady need not worry. All will be as she wishes."

Mrs. Carpenter surveyed him earnestly.

"But we must pack, mustn't we?"

"Oh, I especially request that gracious lady does in all things precisely as if she meant to travel at eight in the morning."

"Then I must go up and tell them all to keep on packing," she said to Dagobert, rising.

He rose, too.

"And then we're going to walk, you know," he reminded her. "It's such

a fine night and no end of delightful walks close by."

"That will be charming," she said, smiling brightly. "Wasn't it lovely of him to say that I could? I can't think what possessed him—he's usually so strict—but so strict."

And then she was gone.

"Don't you make any mistakes in your programme," Dagobert said to the head waiter when they were left alone together. "Remember that I am relying altogether upon you."

"Gracious sir may trust," said the head waiter serenely.

It was about a half-hour before Mrs. Carpenter came down. She had changed her dress and looked very fit for walking in her traveling costume and little close turban with its two quills at the side.

"It's too jolly, his taking it into his head to go to the station like that tonight, isn't it?" she said, looking frankly into Dagobert's eyes as if confident of acquiescence. "Isn't it?"

"Altogether so," said he heartily.

Then they went out of the door and up the Wollenweberstrasse on their way to the Wall.

"He's an awful undertaking," Mrs. Carpenter confided as she went along a sidewalk two feet wide and Dagobert kept pace with her in the gutter. "I tell you, I never was so sick of anything in my life as I am of him." She spoke with great feeling.

"Is it long?" Dagobert ventured to inquire.

"Nearly three years. Oh, heavens!" she answered, and then she gave herself a little shake and said, "I'm always so surprised over how pretty the baby is. Don't you think it's surprising that he should have a pretty baby?"

Dagobert found it impossible to discuss the baby. He wanted to say gallantly how little astonished anyone could be at the baby's beauty, but he somehow felt a bitter resentment over the baby's existing at all. But his better nature finally struggled to the surface and forced him to say that he really considered Mr. Carpenter to be a very good-looking man.

Mrs. Carpenter sighed.

"Well, maybe so," she said, "but I'm awfully tired looking at him, I know. Tiny thinks he's good-looking just the same as you do, but my own opinion is that the baby took mighty big chances. It might have looked just exactly like him ever so easily and then whatever could we have done with its nose? But luckily it inherited my own father's nose."

"There," said Dagobert suddenly, "that's the Kehrriederthurm!"

"Is it, indeed?" said Mrs. Carpenter. "Well, you know if it had had his nose it *never* could have been pretty, could it?"

"I must tell you the legend," then said Dagobert. "Once upon a time—"

"I'll read it in the Baedeker some day when I'm alone," said Mrs. Carpenter. "I'd rather talk to you now; you're the first man I've had to talk to in a month."

"Really?"

"Yes, really. Mr. Carpenter doesn't like to have young men around. They make him nervous on account of Tiny. Tiny's like me—she likes men."

Dagobert perceived the moon shining ahead—it was located in a position to be considered a good omen, but he could not see how any omen could be good under the circumstances. They went up the path to the promenade that runs along the top of the old fortification and followed its summit in the direction of the Sedanstrasse. Dagobert walked with his head set at an angle which commanded a full view of her face, upturned toward the moonbeams. She was positively one of the prettiest sights that he had ever looked upon. He was conscious of a fearful heartache that was growing steadily worse and worse.

"I'm so glad that we have money enough so that I never have to pack," Mrs. Carpenter said presently. "I'd so much rather be out walking with you tonight."

"It is nice," he assented. "I should hate to have had you spend this evening packing."

"Yes, it would have been an awful shame," she said simply.

They strolled on until they reached the end and then turned back and walked the other way, going on and on, past the Kleine Venedig, the Magdalenakirche and all the rest. Finally the Andreaskirche bells, tolling nine, made them turn toward home. Dagobert felt that that day was almost over.

Such a wonderful day! Such a bewildering day! A day upon which more had happened than he had ever before dreamed possible; a day that would probably cost him no end of pain in its consequences, and yet a day from whose consequences he had not the slightest intention of drawing back.

"I am glad that we happened to meet," she said, as they zigzagged through the narrow streets on their way back to the hotel.

"I am, too," he declared heartily.

"When are you coming back to America?" she asked a minute after.

"Dear me, I don't know," he said. "I'm traveling with another fellow, you see."

It came to him with a curious stab how ready he had been to abandon St. Eloi earlier in the day—before he had fully comprehended what had happened.

"Is he nice?" she asked earnestly.

"Nice enough," he answered, laughing a little. "He's French—we were boys together at Ouchy ten years ago."

"Is he as nice as you?" she asked, lifting up her beautiful eyes to him in the moon-rays.

Dagobert laughed with a curious choke in his throat.

"Oh, of course not," he declared.

Then she laughed, too.

"I hope I'll meet him some day," she said.

"I hope that you will," he answered, "and I hope that I'll be there when you do."

"Why?"

"Because I want to meet you again myself." His voice sank as he spoke the words he did not want to say them,

and yet he could not bear to leave them unsaid.

"Do you?" she spoke very earnestly.

"Yes, I do."

She made no answer and he kept silence, too, until they reached the hotel. When they entered, the *Oberkellner* met them, beaming.

"All is arranged," he said. "All is so well arranged I have only to pray—to entreat your graciousnesses to trust completely."

"I'm quite ready to trust you," said Mrs. Carpenter; "only I want to be sure that I don't go."

"Gracious lady will not go, never fear," said the smiling *Oberkellner*.

The gracious lady thereupon went up to see how matters stood above, and Dagobert made up his mind to wait in the lower hall and see if either she or Mr. Carpenter might require any further friendly services of him before retiring.

Mr. Carpenter not getting back from the station as speedily as he had anticipated the pseudo-prince was rewarded for his courtesy by seeing Mrs. Carpenter return below, her face illumined with joy.

"Oh, I am positively too happy to live!" she cried on seeing him. "This came from Tiny while we were out, and she is on the train tonight coming nearer every minute and planning to meet us tomorrow morning in Hanover! Isn't she a dear?"

"Yes, indeed," said Dagobert, joyous in her joy, although growing more depressed hourly on his own account.

"And most of the packing is done, too," she continued, "and Dr. Gibben is too pleased for words that we sail tomorrow. You see, as soon as they get back he's going to marry the baby's trained nurse."

"Is that so?" said Dagobert.

"Yes; it's been a very convenient arrangement because the baby makes such a bond between them that they never neglect him. But it seems rather mean to think how they are all to be fooled tomorrow, don't you think?"

"Oh, I don't know. They'll be married plenty long enough, anyway, probably." He spoke a little bitterly.

"I wish you wouldn't say things like that," said Mrs. Carpenter seriously; "I don't like cynical men, and I don't like jokes about marriage. Marriage isn't any joke and it ought not to be joked about."

"I'll try to remember," said poor Dagobert.

"But I do wonder how the *Oberkellner* has arranged things," she continued. "I want to go to bed, and I keep feeling as if maybe something was about to happen."

"We shall soon know now," said Dagobert. "It is nearly ten, and whatever is to happen must happen by eight tomorrow morning."

"Do you suppose he means to change the clocks and get us to the station too late? I hope he isn't attempting that, for Mr. Carpenter travels with his own alarm-clock."

"All we can do is to trust him."

"Yes, but I do wish that I knew."

There was a little pause, during which she rubbed her eyes sleepily.

"I do wonder," she then suggested anxiously, "where Mr. Carpenter can be. You don't suppose that they could have kidnapped him, do you?"

"Good heavens," exclaimed Dagobert, with a start, "I never thought of that!"

"Oh, no, that couldn't be," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"Why not?" All Dagobert's thoughts were clashing together pell-mell, Mr. Carpenter's jealousy and the fact that his wife was his wife being uppermost in the confusion.

"Because I hear him getting out of a cab," said she calmly.

True enough, Mr. Carpenter was just getting out of a cab at the door. Hurrying in, he explained to them that he had been communicating with Tiny in Leipzig over the long-distance telephone.

"It took the most unconscionable time," he explained.

"I thought that she was on the train now," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"No, they have to wait in Leipzig until eleven."

"Let's go to bed," said Mrs. Carpen-

ter. "I'm sure I'm sleepy, and you are, too, and probably the prince is also."

"I certainly am," said Dagobert, suddenly conscious of how late he had been up the night before and how strenuous a day was drawing to a close.

"Bless me, I declare I forgot that you were a prince," said Mr. Carpenter; "you do look for all the world so like an American! Well, ring for some hot water for me."

Dagobert rang. Mrs. Carpenter began to mount the stairs slowly.

"You'd better come down early and see us off, prince," Mr. Carpenter said agreeably, as he followed suit.

"Yes, I certainly will," said Dagobert.

Then the waiter came and he told him about the hot water, and departed above, himself.

IV

In spite of his fatigue Dagobert found himself unable to sleep that night. His body luxuriated in a spread-out-full-length attitude, but his mind seemed more wakefully inclined than he had ever known before. It chased wildly around among the events of the day just past and showed him himself in so many new and inconsistent characters that he was altogether bewildered. He felt that his situation in regard to the advertisement and its consequences was absurd; that his trust in the wit of the waiter was wholly without foundation; that he belonged anywhere in the world rather than in Hildesheim; and that the shade of Königsmark and the sarcasm of St. Eloi would have a right now to track him till he died. Of course then he thought about Mrs. Carpenter and her sweet face and girlish ways, and didn't blame himself and cursed himself turn and turn about. His good sense feared that in the catastrophe to ensue upon the morrow he would lose forever the friendship of her husband, in which case his chances of meeting her again

would probably diminish very materially. He writhed at that even while he told himself that it was very likely all for the best.

A man rarely ever sets out deliberately to fall in love, but having once fallen in love, he *never* wants to be barred away from its object, if she is married even less so than if she isn't. Dagobert was an uncommonly decent fellow, but he was no exception to any of the usual rules of mankind. He knew now that he was desperately in love with Mrs. Carpenter, he had no intention of pursuing her or attempting to ruin her peace of mind; but he did want, hope and intend to see more of her. And he did not relish the idea of possibly seeing his castle crumble in the air.

Altogether his night was one of restlessness and torments, and only toward dawn did he fall into an uneasy sleep. It seemed that it was hardly on him when he was off again by reason of some fearful crash over his head.

He started up in bed. It seemed to him that the very Wienerhof was falling about his ears at first and then he recollected at once that it must be the conveying below of the extensive Carpenter luggage. Reference to his watch told him that it was a quarter of eight. He sprang to the bell and rang it violently.

The head waiter himself answered. This was surprising, as the head waiter does not usually respond to the first ringing of strangers. Hot water is more often what they desire in the morning—and hot water is what they usually get.

Still, in Dagobert's case the head waiter was most welcome.

"Isn't that the trunks being taken down?" he asked.

The head waiter nodded a smiling assent. His blandness had increased perceptibly during the night.

"Gracious sir must trust blindly," he said. "All is perfectly arranged. The gracious lady has already departed, her maid also."

"Madame has *departed*!" Dagobert cried, astonished.

"Yes, gracious sir, but I must beg for the utmost confidence. I only ask unlimited trust. Success is certain. Hermann has all in charge. I shall myself have the honor to accompany the party to the station. Every detail is ordered exactly. There can be no slip."

Dagobert looked at the man: the breadth of his smile was only to be equaled by the depth of his assurance.

"Can you swear to all that?" the American asked.

"Gracious sir may depend upon me," said the German, "and I am also willing to swear," he added; "to fail is human, but in this case failure is impossible."

Dagobert dismissed him with a gesture and began at once to dress. The disorder outside continued, and after a while Mr. Carpenter's voice was heard dominating the tumult. Shortly after the younger man completed his toilet and emerged into the hall. The luggage was still descending in apparently unlimited quantities, and Mr. Carpenter in a cosmopolitan get-up, helped out by certain expediting native epithets, was supervising things in general, without appearing to hasten matters to any great extent.

Dagobert could not but admire the readiness with which the head waiter was helping the departure on. He was continually taking things from Hermann and putting them somewhere else, calling to the second porter to put down what he was carrying and lend a hand elsewhere, stopping trunks on their way below to the end that he might be personally positive of their being correctly strapped, and in short doing all that he possibly could to prove his sincere interest in the task at hand.

Dagobert felt such a longing to see the game through that he suggested going to the station.

"Yes, do," said Mr. Carpenter. "Why don't you come on over to Hanover with us? It'll just make a nice break in your day."

Dagobert wondered whether he wouldn't. The idea made it necessary

to draw the head waiter to one side and demand fresh assurance.

"Yes, the gracious sir will do well to go to Hanover. . . . Oh, as to the bill—never mind. That will all adjudge itself later."

Dagobert looked hard at the man.

"Gracious sir," he said with an impressiveness known only to head waiters, "leave all to me. I may repeat to you a thousand times that all will move on to complete triumph if I am to be trusted."

Hermann and another man passing down with another trunk ended the conversation. It was the last.

"Now, then, where's the baby?" Mr. Carpenter called from the hall below. The maids scurried up to produce the baby, and the opening of the door above told that it was most lustily alive. Dagobert flew for his hat and coat, and as he emerged he saw the Carpenter heir being taken below by his nurse, his trained nurse and his body physician. Seeing the baby gave him the same awful wrench that he had felt the evening before, but he could not wait to sound its secret springs and merely hastened downstairs in his turn.

Mr. Carpenter stood in the hall below settling his difference with the landlord.

"Did you get any breakfast, prince?" he asked Dagobert.

"I never eat it—we don't."

"Oh, I forgot; well, come on, then."

The Wienerhof omnibus and two carriages were at the door. All the school children who passed that way were banked up about staring at the tremendousness of the entire affair.

The head waiter, in hat and coat, came out and got into the omnibus and drove away first. The baby and his escort took the next carriage; Mr. Carpenter and Dagobert had the last.

"Why did Mrs. Carpenter go so early?" Dagobert was fain to inquire.

"I don't know," said Mr. Carpenter. "I never know why she does anything."

They were just turning into the Zingel, and at the turning the carriage stopped.

"What's the matter?" Mr. Carpenter asked.

"Nothing to speak of, gracious sir." The man on the box was getting down as he spoke, and Mr. Carpenter at once opened the door and got down, too.

"Good I always allow liberal time," he said as he joined in the trouble fore. "Why, I don't see anything wrong here."

There was something wrong, at any rate. The driver was much distressed; he ran from side to side and back again and undid buckles and did them up. In the end he fussed so much that Mr. Carpenter began to chafe and then to swear. Dagobert felt that the first meshes of the plot were beginning to weave, so at last he jumped out, too, and ran back and forth and swore some also.

"I tell you, it's all damned foolishness," Mr. Carpenter exclaimed finally. "That harness is all right; you get up and drive on. Do you hear?"

The driver climbed back on his seat and drove on, and after that they went at a fairly brisk pace. Around at the station the head waiter was standing smiling before the great door, awaiting them. The remainder of the party were above on the platform, he said, but the luggage was waiting, since it was not known on what tickets it was to be checked. Mr. Carpenter produced the tickets, and the head waiter undertook the checking. He was gone so long that Mr. Carpenter's liberal time allowance began to be very sensibly short, and he finally lost patience and hurried over himself. But the man was just handing the paper checks, and the head waiter passed them to Mr. Carpenter at once, although he was to honor them by his company above.

From this point on affairs thickened rapidly. They went through the gates and to the fourth staircase, then discovered that they had been misinformed and had to come back to the first. The train was already in and Hermann, who was to have stood guard by the car containing their re-

served compartments, was not to be seen anywhere.

Dagobert was very anxious to see Mrs. Carpenter, awfully nervous for fear nothing would happen, awfully nervous for fear something had happened, awfully nervous in the knowledge that the moment was so close when something must happen. Mr. Carpenter's excitement and perturbation were beginning to pass all bounds. The train was tremendously long and part of it was corridor and part of it wasn't. Two coupés were reserved in his name and Hermann had been instructed to stand at the door until the last member of the family was entered therein. Hermann had evidently misunderstood, or disobeyed, or both. In the end there was nothing to do—the guard was closing the doors—but for the two gentlemen to "get in anywhere." Travelers know what it means when one has paid for a first-class ticket and a reserved carriage to be obliged to "get in anywhere." Mr. Carpenter scowled, swore, and laid his hand upon the guard-rail. Dagobert was close behind him; the train bell was ringing. And just then the head waiter, who had been rushing madly about in a way that showed how readily dignity may be overcome by anxiety to find Hermann, laid eyes upon him, four cars further back. Hermann was waving vigorously.

"The gracious lady must be there!" exclaimed the *Oberkellner*, signaling Hermann with a fervor that equaled his own.

"What is it?" Mr. Carpenter asked.

"I think Mrs. Carpenter is further back," Dagobert answered. "Hermann seems to be there."

"Well, it's too late to change now," said the husband in deep disgust; "the bell is ringing."

"Shall I run back and make sure?" his friend suggested, seeing an indication of Fate's having possibly arranged for him to travel to Hanover with Mrs. Carpenter.

"I don't believe you'll have time to get there and get aboard. Better wait

and we can get together when we change at Lehrte."

Just then the head waiter hurried up to them.

"Gracious sir," he said to Dagobert, "I pray you at once—without a second's delay—" He seized him by the arm where he was standing just by the train-step.

"Good heavens, *what's* the matter now?" Mr. Carpenter exclaimed.

"I appeal—I implore—" said the head waiter with impressive earnestness.

Dagobert felt that he had no choice but to yield to the man's importunity.

"The train will not go without you," said the head waiter assuringly; "it will wait. Come, come quick!" He hurried him as he spoke across the wide platform and into the little room where all ticket differences are adjusted satisfactorily. Once inside he closed the door. Dagobert looked out of the window.

The train was moving slowly out of the station!

He made one fierce spring, and the head waiter grabbed his arm.

"Gracious sir," he said—he was again all smiles—"all is over. Madame is not on the train."

"Not on the train!" cried the young man.

"No."

"Where is she?"

"At the Wienerhof."

Dagobert reeled against the telegraph desk.

"At the Wienerhof!" he cried in indescribable accents.

"Yes, gracious sir—I promised you that she should not go, and she has not gone. Moreover, it is very easy to represent to her husband that it was all a blunder which I only discovered at this latest moment. He saw me rush with you to the telegraph office. Too late!"

Dagobert took out a handkerchief and wiped his forehead. His brains were so far in abeyance that he could not decide whether to hug the head waiter for his daring ingenuity or whether to knock him down. But

in a few seconds the enormity of the whole thing flashed over him and he very nearly reeled again. What Mr. Carpenter would think, what Mr. Carpenter would do, the utter folly of supposing for a second what Mr. Carpenter would believe—! Oh, how far, how much too far, how much too much too far the clever *Oberkellner* had gone!

"What is Mrs. Carpenter supposed to have done with herself?" he asked after a moment.

"Gracious sir, it is intended to represent that she boarded by mistake the train that passed before this."

"Is there any other train that could get her to the boat in time to sail now?" Dagobert's tone was slow and distinct.

"That will take her to the boat!" said the man in a tone that showed that he doubted his sense of hearing.

"God, man," said Dagobert, "do you realize what you've done!"

The head waiter stared, bewildered.

"Gracious sir is *not* pleased?" he faltered at last.

"Pleased! Pleased that you have done this? No, I'm not pleased, certainly."

The *Oberkellner's* face was slowly growing pale.

"What did the gracious sir desire me to do?" he asked.

"I desired the family prevented from sailing."

"The family!" The *Oberkellner's* tones approximated a shriek. "The family! But gracious sir said only the gracious lady; he declared repeatedly that only the gracious lady must be prevented by some accident from sailing!"

Dagobert felt something like a heat flash go over him. The man was certainly right—he saw the whole thing clearly now. What a mess! What an awful, awful, *awful* mess!

"Come," he said, "come, let us hurry to the hotel. Perhaps—" He didn't finish the sentence. He dashed away toward the staircase and the waiter came running after him. The latter's face had lost all its joyous beaming; he felt that in the supreme moment his success had been crowned with failure.

Outside of the station Dagobert leaped into a cab.

"Get in with me," he said to his accomplice. "The Wienerhof—quick!" he called to the cabman. The taximètre rattled away and then the American turned to the German and demanded fiercely:

"How did you keep her behind? Did you lock her up?"

"No, gracious sir; I only begged her to remain in her room until sent for. Gracious sir is prayed to remember that it was represented to me as of the greatest importance that the gracious lady did not leave for Bremen today."

It seemed as if the exposition of the whole truth would cast Dagobert out of the cab and on to the stones in an access of mad despair.

"My God!" he groaned in English, "I have taken a married woman away from her husband without meaning to be anything but obliging." Then he wondered if he ought not to have telegraphed the train at Lehrte. "What *will* she say? What will she do?" he reflected, in acute misery. "Can I telegraph direct to Lehrte from the hotel?" he asked the head waiter. The head waiter was looking fearfully blue. He bowed his head sadly.

They turned the corner of the Zingel and passed into the Friesenstrasse—the Wienerhof was close at hand. Dagobert felt his heart beset with so many and such terrible emotions that he really hardly knew what he did feel.

The cab stopped.

"You pay him," he said to the waiter. "What room is it? The same as yesterday?"

The head waiter nodded yes and he flew in and up the stairs. The room was up two flights and he climbed them two steps at a time. It was the large room in the middle. He rapped.

"Félice," said Mrs. Carpenter's voice inside, "see what that is."

Félice opened the door.

Dagobert saw into the room and nearly fell over backward.

The room was in nice order and strewn over with the evidence of traveling luxury in an unpacked state.

The maid was trim and neat in her usual uniform. Mrs. Carpenter sat at a small table breakfasting; she had on a peignoir tied with rose ribbons.

"Dear me, is it you?" she said, in great surprise. "Mr. Carpenter told me last night that he meant to ask you to go to Hanover with him. I didn't expect you back until afternoon. Tell me, how *did* you do it?"

Dagobert dragged a chair to the opposite side of the small table and sat feebly down.

"Are we both gone mad?" he asked.

Mrs. Carpenter looked at him, and the smile and fun died out of her face.

"Oh, I forgot that you didn't know," she said; and then she leaned forward and took his hand between both her own.

"Forgive me," she said. "You see, I'm so thoughtless, I always forget that you don't know. But really, I had a right to stay behind if I wanted to; I'm not his wife."

"Not his wife!"

"No," she shook her head; "it was so much easier than to keep explaining because Tiny and I are twins and look so much alike. It was simpler all around. I didn't mind traveling with him a bit, for I really like Mr. Carpenter, and Tiny so wanted a rest, but I couldn't be forever explaining, so I just let it go. I meant to tell you, but it always slipped my mind."

"Not his wife!"

"Oh, no," she shook her head again. "I'm not anyone's wife. I'm not married. I'm only Tiny's sister. I hope you don't mind very much?" She looked at him as she spoke.

"Mind!" He was unable to voice more than the one syllable.

"But I'm so curious about it all. Do tell me now—how *did* you manage to get him off?"

Dagobert rested his head in his hands; he could not help it. All his senses were swaying dizzily back and forth; he *couldn't* understand.

"And I've just had a telegram from Tiny," continued the whilom Mrs. Carpenter; "she'll meet them at Hanover. That will make everything all

right. I telegraphed to Lehrte that I'd heard from her and she would meet them at Hanover. I telegraphed, too, for them to send me the companion and Antonio so that I would be all right. I'm going on to Paris, you know, and of course I want to be all right. I sent the telegram, too, as soon as I saw you all drive away from the door. Isn't the head waiter a dear? He came up and told me just to rely wholly on him and I would not have to go. Tell me, how *did* you manage?"

Dagobert looked at her.

"I am completely bewildered," he said at last. "Am I awake or am I dreaming?"

"I do believe you haven't had any breakfast," she said, laughing. "Félice, run quickly and order another breakfast up here."

Félice obediently fled.

"But what are *you* going to do now?" Dagobert asked, still leaning his head on his hand and still looking at her.

"Do? Why go on to Paris with the companion; she'll be here this afternoon, you know—just as soon as Tiny meets Mr. Carpenter."

"By George, it's like the changing scenes in a panorama," said poor Dagobert. "Do you mind telling me your real name?"

"Dolly Carpenter. It's all one family—only Mr. Carpenter was just distant enough to marry Tiny."

"Then I only need to learn to say Miss instead of Mrs. Carpenter?"

"Yes, that's all."

A waiter came in with Dagobert's breakfast, and while the latter was eating it a telegram arrived from Lehrte.

Most astonished. Sailing anyhow.

L. CARPENTER.

"Now, isn't that nice?" Miss Dolly said pleasantly. "Dear me, but it's good to be rid of him. And to think that Tiny really is ever so fond of him! I can't understand it."

Just then another telegram came in. This time for Dagobert.

Your letter of credit found in my waistcoat. How long do you mean to stay there?

ST. ELOI.

Dagobert jumped with the vividness of his recollection. So that's what he had done when he transferred his bill-book in the confusion of mutual hooks! And St. Eloi had worn the waistcoat to Herrenhausen on the following morning.

"Here's luck," he told his companion. "I've got my money back."

"Your money back!" said Miss Carpenter. "I thought you told me that you were poor."

"Only temporarily," laughed Dagobert; "only *very* temporarily. But what luck!"

"What luck—how?"

"Why, it made me answer the advertisement."

"Oh, so it did. And so we grew to know each other."

They exchanged smiles. Dagobert's breakfast had done him a world of good.

"I must go down and give that head waiter a hundred marks on account," he said suddenly. "I was so upset when I thought he had caused me to separate you from your husband that I think perhaps he's gone into melancholia by this time."

"Oh, yes, do be nice to him, because we're really most awfully obliged to him, aren't we?"

"I am, I know," said Dagobert heartily.

"I'm sure that I am," said his vis-à-vis. Then she took one more little piece of bread, and said gently: "You wouldn't have come between me and my husband, for anything, would you?"

Dagobert felt hot.

"I—I'd have tried not to, I hope," he stammered.

"You wouldn't like a woman if she was married, would you?" she went on, smiling.

"I might like her," he confessed, "but I'd try to keep it under and be decent."

"But you wouldn't fall in love with her?"

He looked straight down at his coffee-cup.

"I might not be able to help lov-

ing her," he said steadily. "We can't always help that, you know. But we can keep from letting anyone know it."

Miss Dolly bowed her face upon her two hands and burst into laughter of the purest and most unaffected kind.

"Oh, my goodness me," she exclaimed, "do you think that you really did that? Oh, you funny man! Do go away now and settle the head waiter and afterwards I'll settle you."

Dagobert looked at her bowed head. She was still laughing heartily. He felt doubtful as to everything in the wide world, and then all of a sudden he felt quite strong and confident.

"After I'm done with the waiter," he said, "let us go out and celebrate our anniversary."

She lifted up her head.

"Anniversary of what?"

"Why, of our first meeting yesterday."

She began to laugh again at that and agreed—still laughing—to be ready to go out in an hour.

Dagobert went downstairs to the head waiter. It took barely five minutes to restore him to his usual beaming condition. Hermann came in for a share of the golden shower, as did nearly everyone else in the house.

And then he went to the telephone and conversed with St. Eloi in Hanover, asking him to go to the station and meet the Carpenter party and arrange all the business there. St. Eloi was quite willing; he promised to explain Dagobert's family and finances to Mr. Carpenter and his wife, even if he had to accompany them as far as Bremerhafen to do it thoroughly. He also undertook to see that the companion was promptly forwarded.

Miss Dolly came down just as Dagobert was finishing his telephoning. She certainly was a very pretty girl, and it was astonishing the way it brightened life to know that she wasn't married.

"As this is our anniversary, shall we take our usual walk?" Dagobert asked.

"Oh, yes," she said; so they went back by the Andreaskirche, the Egger-

meggerstrasse, and the Roland hospital. It was the same sort of a gorgeous sunshiny day as that of yesterday, only to them it seemed infinitely more wonderful.

"What ages it seems since we first met!" she suggested, tipping her head so sweetly to one side that Dagobert reflected for the first time since a future had become possible how dearly he should like to kiss her.

"It does seem a long time," he said solemnly. "Let us always come back here for our anniversaries."

She laughed.

"I don't see why you laugh," he said in a tone of remonstrance. "I fully intend to have ever so many of them, so why not here?"

She only laughed again.

After a while she sobered, though, and said:

"But didn't I do well as a wife? Wasn't I always just as nice as I could be?—and so exasperating as he was, too—but exasperating!"

"As a wife you are ideal," said Dagobert; "only I will confess I didn't like much your being Mr. Carpenter's wife."

She stopped where the street widens by the old Michaeli platz. He stopped, too.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Why, I thought that you were going to say something more," she said. "It was such a good chance, but if you didn't think of it, never mind."

Dagobert had to laugh in his turn.

"Perhaps I did think of saying it," he said, "but twenty-four hours would be such a good reason for you to refuse, you know."

"That's true," she said soberly,

"and if I didn't refuse I know Tiny would think me lacking pride. She refused Mr. Carpenter nine times—she says it is the proper way."

"Nine times is a good many," said Dagobert. "Don't you think three or four would be quite enough under ordinary circumstances?"

"Once has always been enough with me up to now," said Miss Dolly; "but then, of course, if you *don't* mean to marry a man you refuse him in a very different way from if you *do* mean to marry him. Tiny always cried when she refused Mr. Carpenter, and let him keep right on sending her violets. Of course he kept on proposing to her."

"Would you cry if—?" Dagobert asked, looking intently at the Michaelikirche.

She tipped her head on one side some more and reflected.

"You are not a bit like Mr. Carpenter," she said at last.

"But do you mind the difference?"

She reflected a little more and then she said suddenly:

"I'll tell you. Madame Masjon and I will start for Paris this afternoon. Why don't you come there after a little and look us up at the Hôtel de Bade?"

"May I, really?" he asked.

She just looked at him.

"May you, really?" she repeated in great scorn. "Don't you know girls better than to ask things like that?"

He bit his mustache.

"When did you say you thought of leaving?" he asked.

"This afternoon."

"Well, I leave tomorrow. So expect me!"

Miss Dolly looked down at her glove.

"Must I, really?" she said demurely.

"Oh, dear—I mean, how nice!"



THE MONA LISA

By Vance Thompson

EVERY day, except Sunday, Mr. Pendle went to his office in New York; at six in the evening he came again to his suburban home, a half-hour before dinner-time.

The little New Jersey city was an hour's ride from town; it was two hundred years old; it had a hundred thousand inhabitants; and in it there had never been anyone who was not just like everyone else; not a hero in the past, not an artist, not a man even so slightly remarkable that he provoked envy or the passion of emulation; a city as undistinguished as a blank envelope—which contains nothing and is going nowhere. The streets were broad and pleasant, lined by equidistant elms. The houses, set in spacious lawns, differed from each other only in the architectural follies of porches and bay-windows; otherwise they were as monotonously alike as their inhabitants. No such thought had ever occurred to Mr. Pendle; his self-approval extended to all that was his; and his house, his wife, his daughter—because they were his—were superior and exceptional. It was a not unamiable vanity and made his trivial life seem to him singularly distinguished.

"That piano, now," Mr. Pendle would say, "the firm, I suppose, turns out thousands a year, and yet has never made another like it—this was a happy accident, as I say. The moment I saw it I whispered to Mrs. Pendle: 'That's it!' They showed us dozens of others; in fact, this was an exhibition piano and they did not want to sell it; but I insisted—I am always firm—and got it. It is a wonderful piano. Isopel, play that piece by Beethoven."

And, as the tall girl went to the piano, he would add in a whisper, "I always insist upon the best music—Beethoven."

Mr. Pendle was a happy man. His sandy hair was getting gray and thin; his eyes, behind the big, gold-rimmed glasses, were weak; and he had begun to take on stomach; but he had never realized that he was getting old. He took pleasure in his home, in himself, in his little work in the world. Men found him rather hard to get along with. He was so good a man and so conscious of his goodness that he demanded a great deal of deference; deference he felt was his due and any lack of it hurt and angered him. Thus his business life was a sort of daily battle with his employers and fellow-clerks, constant and full of pleasurable excitement. To be sure, these battles were waged almost wholly in his own mind, as he bent over the pages—so meticulously written over—of his ledger; but they dignified his dull labors and kept him more keenly alive. Little disputes with the manager stimulated, as it were, and affirmed his Ego. As he narrated them at home to his sympathetic wife and daughter, his battles became almost epic; the little rusty man had the air of Roland, as he told how he had grueled the great secretary himself.

They loved him well, these women of his house. There was no one so good, they thought—and Mr. Pendle was a good man: no one so intelligent; no one that summed up so completely all that a man should be. In her heart Mrs. Pendle thought the little sandy man, weak-eyed and stomachic, an ideal of masculine beauty, and a phi-

losopher; indeed, as lover and as husband he had always filled and satisfied her imagination—so wonderful is love! She had invented him (as every woman invents the man she loves), and, more than anyone else, she believed in her invention.

Always with a sense of warmth about his heart, Mr. Pendle approached his house. Oh, it was good to come home to those who loved him and were proud of him—to those whom he so proudly loved! And Mrs. Pendle was so truly a woman. She had been a beauty (and not without fortune) when he married her in her native village. Ill-health had tarnished her bright beauty, but she was still valiant and gay. Indeed, her winsomeness, her almost strenuous gaiety, her interest in life, her sympathy with others were so urgent, so fluttering, that they hardly seemed real; and yet they were. She was fond of telling her friends how good God had been to her and how, in her husband and in her daughter, He had blessed her above women. Nor was there anything quite so beautiful as the greeting of these old lovers, when Mr. Pendle came home from his office. She knew his step on the gravel and—if she had not had a "bad day" and been kept to her easy-chair—she would be at the door to meet him; her kiss of welcome was glad and tender as that of a bride.

"What a woman," he would say, "prettier every day!" And then Isopel would come laughing from the little drawing-room and kiss them both.

They would go into the dining-room where the round table, with its white napery and glitter of crystal and silver, awaited them; Mr. Pendle would say a grace and then, unfolding his napkin, ask: "And what have you been doing today, dear?"

There were no secrets in the family. They talked over the events of the day, the visits they had paid, the books they had read, the opinions they had gleaned from the newspapers. The conversation was bright and continuous, interrupted now and then by Mr. Pendle's sententious remarks, for he had a very

deep way of announcing that two and two are four—as indeed they are. Withal he had a taste for discussing serious topics, no matter how stupid they were; so the evening would go profitably by.

Isopel was very like her mother; a little quieter, not quite so beautiful; her serenity was tender and full of charm—you felt that she belonged rightly to twilight. And yet she had no reticences. Her life, no more than that of a flower, had a history. She had come up into her eighteenth year in the warmth and gentleness of this love-haunted home; her thoughts were her father's thoughts; she looked out on life with her mother's quick interest and sympathy—and knew nothing of it; a few school friends, novels and the magazines, her music and the social activity that radiated from the church further up the street, fulfilled her frank and simple days.

Stroking her mother's hand—the poor, pretty, wasted hand!—Isopel would relate in her grave way, and not without quiet drollery, all the little events of the school and the music lesson, the chatter of her girlish friends, all the little rivalries that circled about the coming church fair—the mint and cummin and anise of suburban existence; the mother listened with bright interest on her worn face; and Mr. Pendle nodded and approved and deduced, from trivial happenings, the necessary moral lesson—for Mr. Pendle had been bred in Calvinism, a creed that leaves its mark on a man. Each of them was quite sure that never had there been a family so united—so subtly one in sympathy and feeling; and each, perhaps, was right. They had keyed their minds to the same tone. They hid nothing from each other; secrets wither and die in the keen light of love; no mystery, how faint soever, had come between them; thoughts and feelings were in common; there were no secrets in the family.

"A little music," Mr. Pendle would say, and when Isopel had played the piece by Beethoven, he would sing in his pleasant tenor voice old ballads of

Tosti and Sullivan, the composers of his youth; after that the familiar hymns in which Mrs. Pendle bore the alto. At half-past ten it was bed-time.

It was Isopel's birthday—the nineteenth. Mr. Pendle's thoughts outran his steps as he walked briskly home from the station. He pictured to himself the trim lawn, the cozy dining-room, the parlor where the piano was, with more than usual keenness of anticipation. Under his arm Mr. Pendle carried a square paper-covered package; it was his birthday gift for Isopel—a picture—and he knew just the wall-space on which it should hang in her white-and-blue bedroom. Mr. Pendle's taste in pictures was, of course, that of his neighbors who lived in the smart houses in the spacious lawns. He liked pictures of flowers and fruit, of silken tissues and marble pillars, before which he could stand and say, "You'd think it was real! You could eat that peach, sir!" These finger-exercises of colors and circles—the arpeggio of painting—pleased him infinitely, but for Isopel he had bought something quite different.

Briskly the while Mr. Pendle walked through a picture which he did not see—for an Autumn twilight, stained with amber and violet, made the leafy street beautiful and mystic; and the air was heavy with the death of Summer. As he reached the gate he looked at his watch; six o'clock—his usual time. Mrs. Pendle met him at the door, for she had had a "good day."

"Oh, you've got it, Hugo!" she cried; Mr. Pendle's name was Hugh, but loving fantasy had ornamented it with a second syllable. "Is it the one you thought of first? The melon and grapes? Isopel does love fruit so!"

"Why, where is Isopel?" Mr. Pendle asked, pausing at the parlor door; she had not run to meet him.

"She hasn't come in yet," said Mrs. Pendle. "She practised till five o'clock; then she went out for a walk."

"That's right, she must not neglect either her musical studies or her exercise. Exercise," Mr. Pendle added in

his sententious way, "is the reasonable basis of physical well-being."

He rubbed his big, knuckly hands one over the other; for so small a man his hands were abnormally large—he was proud of the strength in them.

"How did things go at the office, dear?"

"About as usual, but the responsibility is very heavy. I feel it more and more."

"I wish you would give it up, Hugo!"

"And spend your money, dear? No, no, that is for Isopel. And then my responsibility—I spoke quite firmly to the secretary today; but I will tell you all about it when Isopel comes. You have had a good day, sweetheart? I can see it in your pretty face. What a woman! And to think you are the mother of a young lady of nineteen! How time flies!" said Mr. Pendle. "With the wings of a bird."

"Oh, Hugo, the picture—do let me see it!"

"Wouldn't you rather wait? If I open the package when Isopel is here then you can share her surprise—and that will make it doubly pleasant, both for her and for me."

"Of course it will. You always think of the right thing, Hugo. I wish she would come. There goes the quarter. And it is getting dark, I am sure."

"You would hardly call it dark," Mr. Pendle said; "verging upon darkness is my way of putting it. Tell me, dear, what have you been doing today?"

And Mrs. Pendle told him many things; for the servant had broken one of the Limoges saucers, and the pastor had called about the church fair, and Isopel's new dress was finished—it fit her like a glove and the blue was so becoming—and Mrs. Wenham had made a long visit and it was in getting her a cup of tea that Maggie had broken the Limoges saucer. The clock tinkled the half-hour.

"I can't imagine what is keeping her," said Mrs. Pendle.

At any moment, they expected, she would run in, laughing and breathless, to tell them how it happened she was

late. They went into the dining-room together, Mr. Pendle quoting, as he had done on appropriate occasions for twenty years:

"And if when last dinner-bell's rung, she is late,
To insure better manners in future—don't wait."

Maggie, still sullen over the broken saucer, served the soup; they ate very slowly, but when the roast was brought in Isopel had not yet come.

"What can be keeping her!"

"She will have a good reason to give for this apparently inexplicable delay—we may be sure, but it isn't at all like her!"

"She may have stopped at the church, Hugo. They are putting up the decorations."

"We are foolish to worry, sweetheart."

"On her birthday, too!"

"She will explain everything when she comes. Hark!—there she is!"

There were steps on the gravel path; Mr. Pendle half rose from his chair.

"That is not her walk."

The steps were slow; one foot dragged after the other; there was no ring at the bell; the house-door opened, closed; again the slow steps.

"Isopel!" the mother cried.

"Yes, mama."

There was a moment's silence, during which Mr. Pendle looked up impatiently, annoyed at this little mystery which had entered his house. Then Isopel spoke again.

"Mama," she said, "come here, please; I want to speak to you."

Her voice was quiet; her every-day tone betrayed no excitement; but Mrs. Pendle rose hastily and with a "Dear me!" of wonder went into the hall. Mr. Pendle overheard a few whispered words, but they reached him so faintly he was not quite sure what was said. Mother and daughter went together up the stairs. Mr. Pendle heard them go together into Isopel's room. A door closed; then silence. And all this seemed to him very mysterious; in this concealment there was a lack of respect

—a lack of the deference due him; he looked almost angrily at the birthday present, still covered with the paper wrapping, which he had laid on Isopel's chair at table, and his impatience grew. He went to the foot of the stairs and listened. He could hear nothing. At last he called:

"Mama! Isopel! What is it?"

There was no answer.

"Isopel!" he cried sharply; it was not in the habit of his house that he should be left thus at dinner, that things should happen in this unaccountable way. With a little flush of ill-temper he started up the stairs; again he called his daughter's name peremptorily. And, as though it were in answer to his call, there was a sudden cry—something strangled, harsh, ferocious, that was not human—and almost at the same instant a dull noise, as though a weight had fallen along the carpeted floor. For a moment Mr. Pendle hesitated; he was afraid; then he ran up the stairs and turned down the passage to Isopel's room. He tried the door; it was locked.

"Lucy! Isopel!" he said, not very loud, for in his nervousness his voice failed him.

Then he shook the knob and beat upon the panels.

"What is it, Lucy? What is it?"

Behind the locked door there was silence; a silence thick with fear and mystery; every moment it became more tense and awful—this silence which seemed to envelop him like a fog, palpable and persistent, creeping under the closed door, dripping from the walls. He shook the door-knob; suddenly he began to scream. With all his strength—with a kind of mad strength—he threw himself against the door, again and again, until it crashed in. The room was dark. He could see nothing save the faint, white lines of the bed and the glimmer of the windows. He spoke his wife's name, then Isopel's, as he peered into the dark with his short-sighted eyes. His agitation, he knew not why, had passed; he felt weak and cold as though he had come out of a fever, but quiet and self-controlled. He turned

the button at the side of the door and yellow light flooded the room.

"Lucy!"

Mrs. Pendle was sitting in an easy-chair; he looked into her face—and it was very terrible, for her face was a contorted mask, bloodless and set; only the eyes lived and they were fixed upon him with anguish so urgent and wild that he shuddered. And she did not move. Oh, this was what he feared—he knew it now—the deadly paralysis which had lain in wait for her for so many years—that had seized her at last—Lucy, Lucy—his love and his very life sobbed in him as he went toward her.

Abruptly he stopped. Beyond her something lay huddled along the

floor. And he came to that. Isopel had fallen upon her face. She still wore her walking-coat and hat; her hands were gloved. Just as she had come in from the street she lay there, huddled face down at her mother's feet. "She has fainted?" Mr. Pendle whispered.

He looked at his wife and saw in her eyes the anguish—so wild and urgent—which she could not speak. He stooped and touched his daughter; slowly he turned her face to the light. Then with a great cry he fell upon his knees. Isopel was quite dead. Her mouth was burned and stained by the violent poison she had drunk; but on the poor lips was the vague, frozen horror of a smile.



EVE'S PROMISE

By Venita Seibert

FORTH from our Paradise we have been driven!
 With stern and flaming sword before the gates
 Implacable the awful Angel waits;
 Those mighty walls cannot be scaled nor riven,
 And unto us 'twill nevermore be given
 To wander in the Summer-scented air,
 To dream through liliated hours without a care;
 With bitter sorrow we must now be shriven.

Bleak lies the world before our troubled gaze;
 And yet—we are together! Think how bare,
 To one of us left wandering lonely there,
 Eden itself had seemed, how long the days.
 Oh, Adam, lord of me, lift up thine eyes—
 I yet shall lead thee back to Paradise!



FIRST AUTHOR—What was the climax to your last book?
 SECOND AUTHOR—The bill from the publishers for printing it.

THE CRY OF THE HILLBORN

By Bliss Carman

I AM homesick for the mountains—
My heroic mother hills—
And the longing that is on me
No solace ever stills.

I would climb to brooding summits
With their old untarnished dreams,
Cool my heart in forest shadows
To the lull of falling streams;

Hear the innocence of aspens
That babble in the breeze,
And the fragrant sudden showers
That patter on the trees.

I am lonely for my thrushes
In their hermitage withdrawn,
Toning the quiet transports
Of twilight and of dawn.

I need the pure, strong mornings
When the soul of day is still,
With the touch of frost that kindles
The scarlet on the hill;

Lone trails and winding woodroads
To outlooks wild and high,
And the pale moon waiting sundown
Where ledges cut the sky.

I dream of upland clearings
Where cones of sumac burn,
And gaunt and gray-mossed boulders
Lie deep in beds of fern;

The gray and mottled beeches,
The birches' satin sheen,
The majesty of hemlocks
Crowning the blue ravine.

My eyes dim for the skyline
Where purple peaks aspire,
And the forges of the sunset
Flare up in golden fire.

There crests look down unheeding
And see the great winds blow,
Tossing the huddled tree-tops
In canyons far below,

Where cloud-mists from the warm earth
Roll up about their knees,
And hang their filmy tatters
Like prayers upon the trees.

I cry for night-blue shadows
On plain and hill and dome,
The spell of old enchantments,
The sorcery of home.



HIS ACHIEVEMENT

"I TELL you what!" triumphantly ejaculated Uncle Timrod Tarpy, who was a pessimistic old grouch, anyhow, "a college education is a great and gaudy thing, if you just look at it in the right way. Now, there is my nephew, Lester Swizzle—of course, it cost me considerable hard-earned cash to put him through his almy mater, as I believe he calls it, but what's money when you've got a genius in the family? To be sure, when he comes home he corrects our poor but honest grammar for us, rectifies our table manners, reverses our political, social and religious views, wears such raiment that he scares the innocent calves into conniptions, and scorns work as explorers are said to scorn the deadly upas-tree of the tropics; but just look at what he has at last accomplished:

"He contributed—at least, he says he did, and I haven't as yet heard of any extenuating circumstances—to the college paper the line, 'Skiddoo as you would be skiddone by,' and has raised such a rumpus with the editor of the paper published at a rival college, who used and brazenly claimed to be the author of the same line, that he has got his picture and a biography—neither of which resemble or fit him in the slightest degree, further than that the one declares he was born and the other depicts him as wearing only one nose at a time—in three different Sunday papers. Aw, you can't extinguish true genius, no matter how long and hard you try. I guess I ought to know, for if anybody on earth ever tried his mightiest to accomplish that very thing, it's me—or, I should say, I am him!"

TOM P. MORGAN.

THE GODDESS OF ART

By Kate Masterson

EVERYONE noticed how Wormley's verse improved after his marriage with Lisbeth Gray. And it disappointed our set considerably, for Wormley had been one of the stars in our little studio crowd, and we felt hurt to think he had chosen a rank outsider when it came to matrimony after we had all fed him with our chafing-dish suppers and teas for so many seasons during which he had struggled unsuccessfully with the Muse.

We all agreed that Wormley must be the real thing because he seemed to suffer so over his work and to take it so seriously. He was tortured with unfulfilled ambitions and despised pot-boilers, while the rest of us took things easy and didn't do the work for its own sake as he did, but for the shekels it brought us.

Wormley never seemed to let go the trapeze and become human until he had eaten one of Faronte's dinners and reached the coffee and cigarette stage. It never occurred to any of us then that the true trouble with Wormley was that he never got enough to eat. He despised food, as food, he used to say, and while we never quite understood what he meant by that, we realized it was one of his High Think ideas.

He went off on a trip to Maine one Summer for a week, and the news came back to us in the morning papers under a large heading. Wormley had married a Miss Lisbeth Gray, who was spending the season at Bar Harbor with her family—a rich girl and a Vassar graduate. We pictured something in eye-glasses with straight hair and the clothes suspended from the shoulders, for there was a line that she

went in for settlement work and all that. We were art students, you see, and loved to think of ourselves as bohemians because we wore kimonos and slept on couches instead of beds.

Little did we imagine that our pet genius had married a girl who regarded domestic science and all its branches as her life mission. More than that, she was a rich girl. Fancy a rich girl, with a home in the Back Bay, actually choosing cooking and housekeeping as her life work and regarding it as an ennobling idea!

Of course she was so different from Wormley that it was impossible to imagine how they had ever fallen in love with each other, and when he brought her home to that dirty old studio of his where he wrote things that he never seemed to enjoy and sold only rarely it must have been something of a shock to her.

But Lisbeth had a strong, splendid mind and lots of repose. She never let you know exactly what she thought of things or persons, and she had a way of deliberating before she answered even the simplest question, that was rather annoying at first. It was as though she actually weighed her words, and she never talked slang nor smoked cigarettes, but took everything with deadly seriousness.

She might have developed into a first-rate bore if she had married any other man, but the union with Wormley seemed to give her a new object in life; and as for Worms, he began to wear collars instead of riding-stocks, stopped sitting on the floor, and started a campaign of cheerfulness instead of moaning over life and art and editors.

For a time we rather kept away, and then at Faronte's one night we met Lisbeth. We all went to the studio afterward and found it transformed; hideously clean, of course, but artistic with a sort of Japanese effect in furnishing, screens and low stools and very little gimcrackery—the sort we studio-dwellers delight to gather about us, steins and umbrellas and stolen souvenirs from restaurants, and above all, photographs.

Lisbeth had cleaned out about a ton of this sort of stuff, including some stunning nudes that Wormley had always been very proud of. We always called them stunning nudes because he alluded to them in that way, and we wondered if it made him feel hen-pecked to have them taken down. We were amazed afterward to find that Wormley himself had taken them down and given them to Henderson and hung some old Nankin plates up in their places.

The joke of it all was that Wormley had, as they say, fallen in love with Lisbeth for herself alone. He didn't know she was rich, and he never suspected that he was acquiring a high priestess of the saucepan and the salad bowl when he annexed a wife. But she started in to put her theories to the test right away.

The first shock we got was when McFeeters dropped in one afternoon about tea-time and found her in a big checked gingham apron reading the "Life of William Morris." She got to talking about the beauty of usefulness, and McFeeters told us quite impolitely that he could understand how such a serious girl fascinated Wormley, who had been used to our frivolous, flirtatious way of taking life. Of course the thought of the kitchen apron on a two months' bride, in a studio at tea-time, seemed rather rough to us, but Wormley said afterward that this was just the difference between Lisbeth and other girls. She dared to be herself, he said—just as though Anne and Polly and I weren't ourselves.

Then McFeeters went on to tell us a sort of glorified pipe dream about a

dinner that Lisbeth had that very evening cooked and served, he, McFeeters, being a guest and observing with inward delight that Wormley had developed an appetite and no longer despised food as food, or as anything else.

After a while, when we had been at Lisbeth's dinners we felt the same way about it, but wondered how it was she seemed to get as much real enjoyment and happiness out of her cult for the kitchen as though she were making statues or painting pictures or doing posters as we girls did.

We sat up nearly all one night talking it over, and Anne suggested that it might be a peasant strain that had wakened in Lisbeth after having been sleeping for generations.

But then Polly reminded us that Lisbeth was a French student far beyond any of us, could read Greek, was an accomplished musician and a good deal of a beauty, except that she seemed to care nothing for her looks in the coquettish way girls usually did. This idea she had about esthetics in housework and in the kitchen was a profound idea with her—a religion, an art—and she had concentrated on it and had some notion that women should be benefited and upraised if they could ever get their minds away from dress and bridge and gaiety and just grovel in cook-books and invent hygienic egg-beaters and painless lemon-squeezers.

You can imagine how fascinating she was when we got to know that she was actually in earnest and was as artistic about beating an omelet as Henderson might be when he touched up a sunset. She was so entirely unconscious that as the heroine of a comic opera she would have been simply great, and we didn't wonder, after a while, that all the boys—every one of them—got to dropping in at Wormley's studio instead of haunting ours as they used to do.

Then they began talking about Lisbeth's wonderful dinners, and even at the clubs Mrs. Wormley was getting to be quite a celebrity—a new kind of

celebrity for a studio, as you can imagine, for we live in tins when we are at home and at restaurants most of the time. It was incomprehensible to us how anyone could possibly take a delight in cooking and getting up effective dinners. Finally we began to suspect that, after all, it was just a new kind of idea to be attractive in an individual way, for I can assure you that before six months had passed the Wormley studio had become a fashionable craze, and afternoons there were occasions, with reporters from all the papers and carriages at the door and Lisbeth going about among the guests in a kitchen apron with her sleeves rolled up and a chef's cap on her beautiful golden-brown hair.

On Saturday nights they gave small dinners, and the way in which people fished for invitations was simply disgusting. Some of them would pretend they forgot it was Saturday and would drop in, and of course the Wormleys would ask them to stay.

I had about made up my mind that I'd have to crawl in under the tent myself, when one day Lisbeth asked me to come over and join them to meet Bzorky, a Russian pianist who was making a sensation. I got into a new gold-colored gown and put a string of old coins in my hair, for I just thought the Russian might not be educated up to the gingham cult, and that Worms might see that while perhaps I did not dare to be MYSELF, I would do pretty well as a studio attraction at a pinch.

Well, it was one of the weirdest experiences, and yet so thoroughly charming that I decided if I ever went to live in London I would steal Lisbeth's business and go in for the esthetic kitchen idea, and try to get that deadly earnest tremor in my voice when I talked of artichokes and chicken.

I found her curled in the big window, with the sunset lighting her up. She wore a white linen gown with a waist turned in deep about her beautiful strong throat and the sleeves ending at the elbows. Her shoes were white canvas, and she wore the little white cap and the apron was of the daintiest

pink-and-white striped stuff. She was poring over a sheet of paper, and I thought it was one of Worms's poems. It proved to be a menu, however—a dinner that sounded like a breakfast to me, as she read it over for my approval, as though I cared what we ate.

"As for me, dear Lisbeth," I said, throwing just a hint of criticism into my tone, "a book of verses underneath the bough, a loaf of bread, a jug of wine and so forth."

She gave an amused little sigh, and then paused as though she were counting five.

"But you see," she said, "there would be no verses if poets lived on rose-leaves! It sounds very well, but Art must be fed properly. Where do you find all the unsuccessful artists and writers?"

"At the cheap table d'hôtes," I admitted, with a smile.

"There you are! Now, my idea is that the right sort of food, well selected and exquisitely cooked and served, with simplicity as the chief idea, produces the desire to create beauty. I think talented persons, like—like——"

"Worms?" suggested I.

She started.

"Like my husband—and—and all of you folks, should have training tables, just as the athletes do in college."

"Carrots and prunes and things?" I asked shudderingly.

"Dear me—no! Athletes train for muscle and strength and endurance. Artists should train for beautiful fancies and the power to express them, which is far more."

"And the ability to sell them, when expressed?" I ventured, with a touch of satire.

"The right sort of thing always does sell!" she said. "If clever people didn't engulf their talents in tea and cheap oil and bad spices and cold storage foods—we might have some art in America! Look at the great Italian singers how they live!"

"Garlic and oil and cheese and Chi-anti," I rattled off.

"Nevertheless, these are the foods that produce vocal music!" she said.

"Feed Bonci or Caruso or Melba and Calvé on steaks and oysters and lobsters and they'll cease to sing!"

"Do you really think so?" I asked. "Aren't you taking it all too seriously?"

"The wife of a poet must help him succeed," she answered. "Now, don't fancy that I mean genius should be fattened up like a Strasbourg goose. But there are lobes and tissues in the brain of the creative artist that must be properly nourished. Eating is not a lovely process. It must be made ideal and beautiful."

"No doubt you are right," I admitted. It really was a quaint idea.

"The Greek period in Art," she went on, "proves that this was understood. There were garlands of roses on the urns and all the dishes were arranged with the idea of odor and fragrance and color!"

I simply bit my lip at this. I hadn't the faintest idea about the Greek period in Art, except a vague notion that the people were horribly dissipated about that time.

"When are the men coming?" I asked her rather suddenly.

"I'll telephone to the club if they don't arrive in time," she said. "We have no set hour. Did you know that Mr. Wormley had been made editor of the *Lance-at-Rest*?"

"Is it so?" I remarked coldly. Mr. Wormley! That was a bit too much. "You really must let me help. What shall I do?"

She gave me a florist's box filled with crocuses, and put a lace cover over the low table beneath the big beaded shade.

"Pick out the nicest and put them in that Belleek bowl on the window," she said. "We won't have them on the table."

"No garlands?" said I.

"No. Flowers at dinner are a mistake. That is—not so close. They are in the way!"

"And the candle-shades always catch fire!" I went on merrily. The conversation was different from anything I was used to. We always talk shop.

"So we have them unshaded in the

brass sconces on the wall," explained Lisbeth, as she put on some perfect grapefruit in tall frosted glasses.

"How do you manage without a maid?" I asked, watching her dainty white hands among the dishes.

"We have a Jap who comes in when we are all finished, and clears away! We don't like a servant moping about while we talk. They seem to hurry one so."

"True!" said I, thinking of Pedro, at Faronte's, who began to brush off the tablecloth for dessert before one was finished with the salad.

"We don't have regular dinners," she said; "not anything that requires tremendous fussing. Lots of cold dishes—like this!"

She let me peer under a napkin at some deviled eggs halved lengthwise. "There are anchovies in them," she said. "If you like Omar's dinner you'll like mine, there's so little of it!"

I smiled in a sickly way at Lisbeth and began to wonder if, maybe, she was a vegetarian. I was getting hungry and hoped she really would give us something to eat. She seemed to divine my thoughts.

"Next we have creamed chicken in the chafer," she said; "real cream and country chickens a farmer brings in to us once a week. It's all ready in the dish beforehand, and we just heat it up and add butter and paprika and powdered parsley."

"I never met a real country chicken," I said, more pleased than before. "The kind I am acquainted with comes boneless in cans."

She was arranging green peas in a deep dish with tiny bits of bacon scattered through.

"From the country?" I asked politely.

"No, from France," she answered. "But this is the true Parisian way of cooking them. When they are served you will taste the bacon without seeing it!"

"How delightfully subtle!" I remarked.

"Then this salad in the big blue

bowl—Mr.—that is—my husband—makes the dressing.”

“I know he does!” I agreed. “And gets cigarette ashes in it!”

“Not now!” she smiled. “He respects a salad now!”

I laughed cynically as the men came in laden down with books and roses and candies. Wormley, clean-shaven, wore a boutonniere. Certainly he was a changed man. He had nothing to complain of. The world was fresh and beautiful to him and he was glad to be alive.

We dined charmingly on just those few things helped out with a bottle of sparkling Chablis that Worms had brought home from the club—fancy Worms bringing home roses and Chablis! Then we had Gervais cheese and Bar-le-Duc and coffee brewed in a French machine on the table.

But the crowning joy of the feast was a big yellow primrose made of ice-cream. It was a wonder! The centre was of a brownish chocolate with macaroon in it and the petals were dainty with lemon. It was a wonderful thing. It fairly dazed me, and I said so.

“It’s terribly simple, really,” said Lisbeth; “just some eggs and cream and chocolate frozen in a mold. It’s more attractive this way, don’t you think?”

We all had some more. We were simply speechless with the idea of anyone accomplishing a triumph like this. And Lisbeth enjoyed it herself as much as any of us.

I began to see, then, what Wormley had meant when he used to say he didn’t care for food as food. It merely was that he didn’t like to swallow spaghetti in half-yard loops like Henderson, and put burnt-out matches in the coffee-cups.

He grew eloquently quiet as he smoked, and then Bzorky made music for us, and not one of us spoke a word. Even the Jap in the little kitchen stopped his clatter to listen to that German song.

I could distinctly feel the picturesque side of it, with Lisbeth there at the

piano in her gingham apron and Bzorky looking out over the New York roofs with their glittering crown of electric lights, and Wormley content at last, with his arms clasped back of his head.

One had to admit that it did seem like a poet’s home, and poets’ homes are so disappointing as a general thing. Now if Worms had married a girl who wrote or painted it would never have been like this.

“It’s simply perfect, old man,” I whispered to him as Lisbeth went out and the Russian took her place at the piano.

“You make of life—the divine comedy!” he exclaimed, trailing his fingers over the keys. “I shall go home and write an opera!”

“It’s all Lisbeth!” said Wormley. “I feel that way, too! She makes music out of life itself!”

“She has the heart of the poet!” said Bzorky. “But it sounds so cold in English! Hush! Here she is! You must not let her discover how wonderful she is!”

“I shall design a great poster to-night!” I declared half-jokingly, for of course I understood *their* enthusiasm. They were both men and had enjoyed their dinner—that was all! “I shall do Lisbeth in her apron handing out the star of inspiration on a soup-ladle—and I’ll call it the Goddess of Art!”

“Good!” laughed Wormley, and the clock chimed as we began to get ready to go. At least I did, for I was a bit tired of it; but Bzorky also said good night and we went out in the hall together, the Wormleys standing framed in the door with the light back of them.

Something was wrong with the main elevator and the boy told us we could take a small one at the rear of the hall—it was a servants’ lift, and landed us on a back street.

A caterer’s wagon was drawn up and the Wormleys’ Jap was helping a man put in some ovens and packing tins and plates. Suddenly I clutched Bzorky’s arm.

“What’s the matter? Do you feel

faint?" he asked kindly, in his broken English.

I had just seen an ice-cream mold going into the wagon. It represented a big flat primrose. The secret was out now. This was the way all those wonderful dinners and things really came, and Lisbeth just wore the apron and fussed with them in the chafer.

I began to laugh hysterically.

"The air—will do you good, eh?" said Bzorky. "You must not try to do the poster tonight, eh? Wait until the new day tomorrow."

"Oh, no!" I almost shrieked in my horrid glee. "I shall do it tonight—but I've had another inspiration. I'm going to frame it in tin primroses and present it to the Wormleys!"



THE SAND

By Archibald Sullivan

OW the gold sand quivered where it lay,
Gold face, gold hair, gold limb upon the lea,
Bound with a thousand silken bands of sea,
Hearing the waves that lash the fading day.

But each proud wave comes surging from its place,
And breaks to cool caresses on the strand;
Plays with its hair, goes wandering through its hand,
And dies to leave a kiss upon its face.



"ETHEL has gone over to the church to pray."

"To pray! What for?"

"For her husband, of course."

"Why, she hasn't any!"

"I know it."



SOME men are born poets, but for the vast majority it's their own fault.

HIS SILENT PARTNERS

By John Regnault Ellyson

RARE OLD BOOKS

PAUL GRATTAN

SO read the sign hanging over the door. The small shop on Marshall street was kept very clean: each day the windows were wiped off, the pavement and floor swept, the shelves and books dusted. In going by there early in the morning you saw this being done, and, if curiosity prompted, you paused.

The view was worth the pause. The sponge and broom and duster could not render Grattan prosaic or insignificant. He was a well-made, dark, handsome, intellectual young man whose shapely brow, fine mouth and warm brown eyes were not his least attractive features.

He was reserved, almost shy. He had been the devoted companion of his mother while she lived and, afterward, his father's constant comrade. He had imbibed the one's love of poetry and music and something of the other's passion for rare books.

At the father's death affairs were involved and, owing to the poor judgment of the lawyers in throwing probably the most valuable private library in the South on the market without ample notice, not enough was realized to clear the estate. Certain interests coming from his mother afforded the young man a chance to purchase very many of these volumes and to carry out the plans he subsequently formed. Before leaving Portsmouth he paid such of his father's debts as lay within his means and assumed the burden of the rest by giving personal notes to the

three remaining creditors—an action perilously naive, uncommonly honorable.

He was twenty-two when in January, 1903, he came to Richmond and opened his bookstall. Transportation, fixtures for his stock and various lighter expenses left him but an inconsiderable amount of money. He lived, therefore, economically, ate two meals daily at a neighboring restaurant, did for himself what was to be done in the shop and slept on the premises. To secure the main floor of the house he had been compelled to take the upper story, consisting of a little rear room which he chose as his chamber and a larger room, which, though fronting the street and at once placarded for rent, remained a long time unoccupied.

Meanwhile he arranged his stock and made an admirable exhibit, providing thus and in other ways for the accommodation of scholars and book-lovers. These, however, were slow in coming and the receipts were beggarly. Advertising locally in the words of his sign, much to his surprise, brought more sellers than buyers, but the opportunity of obtaining the pick of what was offered at low rates he soon recognized, and took advantage of as far as his slim purse allowed. By-and-bye, he began circulating list-leaflets among Northern and Western collectors, with some of whom his father had been on cordial and excellent terms, and awaited results. In the long leisure hours, while he dipped into his pet studies or recalled the pleasures and the loved ones of childhood—while he lost hope and brooded or whipped up his fancy and built castles, he ever and

again caught himself thinking of the empty room as though the idle thing were a big, persistent fly buzzing above his head.

Toward the end of March an elderly person, who examined this room, seemed not particularly pleased, but indulged in no unfavorable comment, asked no questions and finally proposed to take the chamber at \$52 a year payable weekly in advance. Double the sum would have been a sufficiently modest offer, but Grattan hesitated merely a moment and then handed over the key. On the same day several articles of furniture, antique and cumbrous, were set up in the chamber. On the same day, too, by the late mail Grattan received from Chicago an order amounting to rather more than his entire previous sales. The poetic paganism that is in all of us prompted the young man to connect the windfall with the coming of Richard Madama.

The tenant was seventy and active for that age, a man of quiet habits and few words. He left his room at eight in the morning, returning at four in the evening. On Saturdays he got back at noon, at which time he usually paid his rent, having always the exact change and always accepting a receipt. In the beginning he went in and out by the hallway; then he began passing through the store and exchanging a nod with Grattan. At the close of the Summer he was to be found in the shop five afternoons out of six.

Mr. Madama was never in the way. Indeed, he was no more obtrusive than the knob of the door and less social an object than the jamb. He had none of the sorry nervous tricks by which certain people make known their presence and make themselves intolerable. It was necessary to look about and see if he were there in the place—behind a shelf or in some corner, sitting like a shadow with glasses on his nose and a book in hand.

Latterly he betrayed signs of animation and concern in affairs. Sometimes he assisted in packing a foreign order, sometimes checked up an ac-

count, sometimes waited on a customer. He was uniformly correct, formal, uninteresting, dull. No one could tempt him to converse or to express a decided opinion—not even Grattan. He listened to whatever Paul would say, but added nothing in dissent or approval.

Though day by day brushing elbows and on Sundays taking meals at the same restaurant and long strolls in the country, they apparently got no nearer together; in truth, however, the old man knew the things worth knowing about Grattan, who talked and talked very well—modestly and with frankness, but the young man knew absolutely nothing about Mr. Madama. It was by chance, for instance, that he discovered his companion had a relative. In passing along the Hermitage Road on one occasion a Colonial dwelling with ample lawn caught Paul's eye and he commented on the style of the house and the beauty of the grounds, whereupon Mr. Madama remarked that his brother lived there—"my brother Stephen," said he, "sometimes called the general," and that was all—no hint, no smile or shrug that might have added life to a barren phrase. Grattan, notwithstanding his old friend's peculiarities, grew fond of him, showed him numerous courtesies and consulted his wishes so far as these could be divined.

Early in 1904, trade proving exceptionally good, Paul took up the largest of the notes given in settlement of his father's debts. This swept clean his supply of cash and yet proclaimed a seemingly prosperous condition. The holder of the note for \$300—the second note—put the scrip in court and secured judgment. Paul, feeling cruelly the blow, spoke of it, abashed and astonished; he was equally astonished the next morning when, on going down to open shop, he found near the crack of the street-door a thin sheaf of three one-hundred-dollar bills. It was just like Grattan that, with the attachment threatening, he should yet have had the fine courage to advertise in an evening paper for the owner of the "lost money," thereby exciting in Mr. Ma-

dama undue eloquence and an exceedingly whimsical display of wrath. In sooth, it was Mr. Madama who at last got possession of the crisp bills and saved the stock. He characterized Grattan's act as "a vicious tempting of Providence," and declined to show himself for forty-eight hours.

Within this brief interval there happened something more wonderful in many respects than the fall of three greenback-skylarks at a young man's feet.

The day after the Madama exit and at noon, a lady walked into the little shop. Paul was making change for a person who tediously dallied with his purse and with his words and then went out. The lady had turned on entering and regarded the titles of several books on the opposite shelves. Paul, as soon as free, stepped forward near where she stood, but seeing that she was for the moment absorbed in a pamphlet, he slipped a chair softly within touch and withdrew behind his low desk in the angle of the other window and the wall. He carried her image with him, however, and its charms—the simple, yet beautiful attire, the slender, graceful figure, the dark, abundant hair and the delicate profile not unlike that of the Venus de Medici. But the living image was here so close at hand that now and again he glanced toward the young woman—she was nineteen or twenty, perhaps—and at every fresh glimpse he breathed irregularly and his pulse quickened.

After a while she took the chair at her side and became interested in another pamphlet. He remained in his position on the stool and opened a catalogue. As often as he dared he raised his eyes.

No one came in. Scarcely anyone passed the door. It was very quiet on the street, very delicious inside. There was a singularly pure, luminous quality in the air, especially in the space between the finger on the catalogue and the lighted profile across the way. He made no sound that might disturb the quietude. He had

no wish to move; he could, he imagined, have stayed there forever.

More than an hour elapsed and, when he suddenly looked up, she was immediately before him. For an instant, as he rose, all things swam round except the lovely face now a trifle flushed—the exquisite de Medici face and its gray, scintillant eyes. Then he saw that she held two slender little volumes.

"Mr. Grattan, is the price on the fly-leaf?"

"On the fly-leaf—yes."

"I want these—one is marked two, the other three dollars."

"Will you have them sent—home?"

"No, I'll take them—thank you, unwrapped, as they are."

She paid him. He reached the door in time to open it, but how he performed the service, whether stupidly or aright, he could not have told. That in leaving she slightly inclined her head he did remember, and he remembered, also, the movement of her lips—scarcely a smile, scarcely a murmur, but the perfection of it, and the adorable mouth. Long after she had gone there lingered the faint odor of laurel, the sweetness of a voice and the face of a goddess.

By an inspection of the shelf only he ascertained what volumes she had purchased, and he entered them by their titles in the cashbook with the amount paid for each under the letters *V de M*. The clear and trim record was separated from the preceding entry by a space of two lines, and from any memorandum that might follow by a dainty half-score of five-pointed stars. It chronicled a date never to be forgotten; an advent, a renaissance, an hour of noon that held the magic of dawn.

The evening drifted by in reverie; throughout the night Paul, as chances with people who are sick or restless, heard every bell that sounded, but, as these others often do, he slept between the strokes. Sleep in his case was a continuation of his thoughts while awake, fancy chiefly playing about two objects—the de Medici

profile that in childhood hung above his mother's favorite chair and the lady who, goddess-like, had stolen off with his heart.

Again and again, just as *V de M's* absence became unbearable, she reappeared. She was always simply attired, always beautiful and serious; she made a purchase on each occasion, but very few words passed between them. She remained sometimes half an hour—longer, sometimes. Once in coming late she stayed until Mr. Madama arrived. That gentleman, as usual, without any noise opened and closed the door. As soon as he walked in, however, and saw the lady, he walked out.

On her part she had merely raised her lids, arched her brows and, when the door noiselessly swung to after him, she laughed softly. The laughter of the woman you love—even if against you or at the expense of a friend—is music that bewitches. Paul was stirred sympathetically, kindled; all his features sparkled as he explained who the man was, why he liked him—speaking warmly, the color dipping through his olive skin and his clipped words fluttering like the color.

"But surely he is very droll," she said.

And so the incident ended. He had wondered what would occur when she and Mr. Madama met; he wondered now what Mr. Madama would say on his return. Somehow he expected a remark, at least, he was disappointed, almost vexed—Mr. Madama had nothing to say.

The first appearance of *V de M* was in middle May. During the Autumn she came more frequently. That motives which sway the finest of the sex—that whim or coquetry or curiosity brought her here, there was no evidence. On the other hand, her knowledge of books and her love of them were abundantly manifest. Beyond doubt the manner, the well-bred delicacy of Grattan, the reserve that all but equaled her own, rendered possible and pleasurable these unconventionally repeated visits. Like Ma-

dama, but with infinitely more grace, she also, at times, did many thoughtful little services and made whatever she did seem under the circumstances the most natural action in the world. Like Madama, too, she was silent, but her silence was that of pure nature—the silence of sky and field and still, deep waters. And when she spoke on rare occasions, briefly and much to the point, Paul knew not with what to compare her voice—a bird-throated voice, buoyant and sweet, haunting and lyrical.

Paul, you observe, had the good stars on his side. Destiny, coming as a kindly spirit and entering without knocking, had, in fact, shaped up events—quite hidden the springs and traps, of course, thrown the piquancy of adventure there, the attraction of mystery, and brought about a drama conceivable only in a little bookshop—a drama in miniature and romantic in plot, yet with no protestations and no vows, no gifts bestowed and no favors accepted, no confidences and no small talk.

And Destiny continued the jugglery. The Gordon note, twice curtailed—"the last of those notes, thank heaven, madame"—changed hands and in its new form and with the new year flashed to the front. If Paul had not cut his ready funds into ribbons by adding extensively to his stock—but he had, and, this being so, he was staggered, struck dumb. Three days after he received the \$500 note, stamped as with a king's seal, from the bank at Portsmouth. He sent off two letters of inquiry: the bank official wrote, "Paid in cash by parties unknown," and the attorneys responded, "We regret that we can throw no light on the matter."

And Destiny persisted in juggling. Trade improved; the mail brought orders; the bookworms and book-lovers dropped into the bookish Eden and found what they wanted; the darkly mysterious Madama and the deliciously mysterious *V de M* came and went. The shop now and then might be too quiet, but for Paul the charm was in the very hours of these

especial days. He was so inexpressibly happy that he was almost afraid to form the most innocent, ardent, wishes: as strange things had happened, strange things might happen—and then?

Yes, and then in early April the clouds came. *V de M* failed to appear for a week—for two weeks—for a month and more. It was astonishing, incomprehensible; he could charge himself with nothing that might be the cause, and, if it were no fault of his, it could surely be no fault of hers. He sought for excuses, day after day—for reasons to cheat himself and hope. He suffered and suffered the more in that he suffered in silence.

Where could he turn—to Madama, whom he avoided—Madama, who was often absent now and, when there, quite as dull as a mummy, as inscrutable as the Sphinx? Occasionally he saw Mr. Madama in conversation with the physician who daily at noon for some weeks visited a house on the same block. What did it mean?—to him, nothing. Indeed, had he not been blinded he would have noted that the old man was also preoccupied, also depressed, also suffering in silence.

One morning, hearing a loud knocking in the room overhead, Paul ran upstairs and found Mr. Madama lying on the floor, rapping with his cane, repeating as well as could be understood: "General Madama—Hermitage Road." It was after placing him in bed and at ease that Paul thought of the physician whom he had seen several times across the way. He glanced at the clock—looked out the window.

The physician was at his carriage-step when Paul accosted him and explained what had occurred, mentioning Madama's name.

"Ah, indeed!—my old friend, Richard. . . . Come—I'll go at once."

"Doctor, he wishes me to bring his brother here—"

"His brother! . . . Well," said the physician, readjusting the glasses that had slipped from his nose, "well, I've heard of such things. . . . You are going after the general?"

"As soon as I get my hat and lock the shop-door—"

"Then take my coupé. My driver knows the house."

II

At the house on the Hermitage Road Paul was ushered by the servant into the library. Somewhat in appearance like his brother, a year or two younger and a handsomer man, the general seemed in excellent health, though sitting in an invalid's chair. He sat erect in the attitude of a commanding officer awaiting the report of a courier.

"General," said Paul, "I come with bad news—"

The servant, who moved as if to speak, was waved aside by the general.

"Well?" said he, looking fixedly at Grattan.

"Your brother is dying and he begs—"

The general rose, trembling.

"What! you mean that we are to bury the dead? Let the town burn! Let others bury the dead! . . ."

The servant gently put his arms around the general, who feebly struggled until someone in the neighboring hall softly called:

"Papa."

The face of the old warrior instantly brightened. He ceased struggling and sank back into his chair.

The charming voice that calmed the general aroused Grattan. His heart gave a wild throb. He lifted his eyes and saw *V de M* coming through the doorway. She was exceedingly pale, exceedingly lovely. She walked with the languor of a *convalescente*. She was dressed as for a little stroll or drive. She greeted Paul with a sweet murmur and glance of welcome, went to her father's chair, leaned over and caressed him and then said:

"Dear papa, this is Mr. Grattan, whom you and I have spoken of often."

The general regarded Paul with childish eagerness and drawled now as he said:

"How d'ye do, Mr. Grattan! My

daughter likes you. I remember your father—is he in town? He must come and we will arrange——”

“Papa dear, see!—the clouds have scattered! See what a splendid day it is! Yes, why not let Gabriel take you a turn on the road? . . . We are also going—Mr. Grattan and I, for a long drive.”

The general listened, but kept his eyes on Paul.

“You—you must come back,” said he, stroking the young man’s sleeve. “I like you, and so—and so——”

“Yes, general—yes, you may be sure I will come back,” said Paul, pressing his hand warmly and smiling.

The smile faded from his lips, however, when he was alone with his companion on the porch.

“It was so stupid of me——” he began.

“How could you possibly have guessed father’s condition at a glance? . . . But what of uncle? Oh, believe me, I’m not in the least nervous—only not yet very strong. Pray, don’t hesitate.”

But he did. As she spoke she had laid her hand on his arm: their shoulders brushed as each caught the other’s movement forward—to the edge of the porch and down three shallow steps. The touch made him glow and the view in front of him impressed him singularly—the broad green lawn, the white path lying straight and glittering in the sun and the little coupé at the gate. He felt as though it were a picture or dream—as though she and he were pieces of the picture or the dream. When her voice had melted there were strange instruments being played upon—the pipe of the redbird, the flute of the wood-thrush.

Oh, it was wonderful. She was near him; she was leaning on his arm. The fine gravel crunched prettily under her light tread. The very atmosphere breathed of her; the odor from the blossoms that bordered the path seemed filtered through her garments, through her hair.

A moment ago and his mission was so clear. But Mr. Madama was far away now—at the end of the earth, as

remotely placed as the general was—a stone’s throw back. It was an effort to reach either, even in thought, for between the old gentlemen stretched enchanted ground. His chief concern for the moment was that he should not trip and wake. But does one ever trip on a fair level—does one ever wake while a de Medici face is so close to his own?

Then it came to him—the query. She had asked a question and he had not answered; she had begged him not to hesitate and he was still mute. His eyes were moist, his throat was dry.

They had gone down half the length of the path and then it was she who spoke.

“Why, Mr. Grattan, you came in my doctor’s carriage.”

“I—I did not know. Oh, yes, true—he said the driver knew the house. I had good luck in meeting him—the doctor. He was so considerate. He put his carriage at my disposal. He is with your uncle——”

“It wasn’t an accident, was it?”

“No—Mr. Madama was in his room. He rapped with his cane. He was taken suddenly, perhaps——”

The fingers tightened on his arm.

“You told father that he was very ill, that he——”

“But maybe it isn’t so—ah, no, I shouldn’t have said——”

“Is that frank? Please, now——”

“Forgive me, I beg of you. I didn’t intend to deceive. He is paralyzed, as I judge, partially paralyzed. He couldn’t do much for himself or say much. His speech was thick, confused, but his mind seemed perfectly clear. However, as it was, I didn’t remain there long. In fact, while I was getting him in bed, making him as comfortable as I could, he fretted because I didn’t do as he bade me. He repeated the very same thing over and over, and at last I understood I was to go for General Madama——”

They had reached the gate and both passed out in silence. Then, in the next moment, they were in the coupé, side by side, and here it was she who again spoke first.

"'Twasn't father he sent for—he sent for me," she said. "He speaks of father always by his Christian name, never as General Madama. You mistook my name—Genevieve—for father's title—"

"Oh—that's what he was trying so hard to tell. I might have guessed, I think. It is beautiful, the most beautiful of all names. So it is yours—it was mother's, too. May I call you—?"

He wondered what he was saying and abruptly paused.

"You may call me 'cousin,'" she said.

"Am I your cousin?" he asked, amazed, delighted.

"No, but we are good friends and it sounds well."

"Tell me, cousin—if I may really call you so—tell me, haven't you been ill?"

"Yes."

"Since—ever since you have been away?"

"Yes."

"And you couldn't find it in your heart to let me know?"

"But uncle didn't think it best—"

"He knew and he didn't tell me!"

"The dear old soul. Ah, he worried so himself that he thought you might foolishly worry about it. Every day, early and late, he went to the doctor's for news, and twice he came to me in this very little coupé. Oh, that was something tremendous for him to do! He hadn't been inside the house for twenty years—but this is the only time I was ever sick. . . . You see, the Madamas are curious folks and uncle, I must say, isn't the least curious of us."

Paul would have spoken, but speech got no further than a sympathetic smile, an interrogatory glance. Her response followed the moment's impulse.

"He and father," she said, "were estranged by father's marriage. Both were deeply in love with mother. They were much older than she and their rivalry was rather a bitterly serious affair. Mother retained great influence over them, though she could

never induce them to make up. Before she died, ten years ago, she begged me to bring them together, if possible. They were the more devoted to me because I resembled her, but what could I do? I could have managed father, I think, but uncle saw through all my tricks, upset all my plans, defied me and made me very proud of him. . . ."

She babbled on in detail; he hung on her words. The dust flew in their wake; the breeze through the windows fanned their faces and their hair; the panorama of undulating fields and low, blue horizons or green wooded spaces unrolled on two sides of them, but they gave sole heed to one another—their own world, in the moving nook of their own world, in the tufted and plum-colored nest of the coupé.

"I fancy," she said, in conclusion, "I fancy he is fond of no one but you and me and some few dumb creatures. He says of us that we amuse him—did you ever imagine he could be amused? Yes, and he can talk, too, when he chooses, when it serves his whim. . . . And how often he talked of you! Once he played upon my feelings and wheedled me into going to your shop—"

"You came there contrary to your wishes?"

"To be candid—yes, at first."

"And then?"

"Then he couldn't keep me away—it was such a quiet, quiet place."

The whiff of banter did not check or divert Paul.

"And afterwards he tried to keep you away?"

"Oh, no, but he was frequently so provoking—"

"Provoking? How?"

"He exacted so many promises. He had his own notions, his own ways, and I humored him, you see; that's all."

"For the life of me I don't understand. Why, pray, did he keep me so long in the dark?"

"In the dark?" she said softly.

"Oh, I mean—I mean—stumbling about blindly in the sunlight."

"He is very much attached to you, cousin, very much and in spite of himself. You know what I mean. He is one of those who conceive an attachment with a struggle, with resentment, with doubts. He knew you thoroughly, talked of you incessantly, praised you without stint, but it was hard for him to believe that you were—that you were all you seemed to be."

She had lowered her lashes. She saw that he was unconsciously crumpling one of her gloves. The gray iris peeped upward. She could see that he was looking at one of her hands.

The coupé, swaying gently and moving rapidly, turned into Marshall street. The lull was a trifle prolonged. Then he spoke.

"Cousin, you will tell me something, won't you?"

Their eyes met.

"Certainly," she said.

"The money left under my door—did it come from you?"

"You forget—I wasn't acquainted with you then."

"I don't doubt you—but you are smiling."

"The money came from him——"

"Your uncle?—but he is very poor——"

"He's very peculiar, a very rugged, dear old soul, but he isn't a poor man. For years he dabbled in stocks—successfully and threw the gains into innumerable small houses, out of which come a snug income."

"So it was he, and he, too, who settled the Gordon note?"

"Oh, no, no—he knew nothing of that"—she laughed, colored, went on bravely—"and I don't think he would forgive me if he knew."

"You——"

"Yes—but you aren't vexed?—it gave me so much pleasure."

"Surely I never mentioned—how then——"

"Oh, simply. There was a letter among the things I was arranging in your desk one day. . . . It wasn't altogether nice, but the day before you did a thing that wasn't altogether nice——"

"I?"

"Don't you remember? You stole my gloves and I had to borrow yours."

Her lashes hid the gray of the iris, her lips became a flower. By an action wherein love spoke he placed his hand on one of hers and looked at her exquisite profile—the wave in the hair, the brow, the web of the lashes and the flower that was her mouth, looked at them with dreamy lights in his warm brown eyes.

But the words that might have followed did not. The little coupé at that moment drew up before the little bookshop.

Down the hall, up the steep, narrow staircase, and here was the chamber where, if Death had come, he and his trappings were invisible. The windows, near the second of which the physician sat, were open and the air sweetened the room with its freshness. The place, bright and clean as it had ever been, differed somewhat—as Paul thought, but then to him nothing was just the same as it had been an hour ago. The chamber, in fact, resembled a stage-scene in which he, divining not the drift of the plot, took a strange part.

Mr. Madama lay in bed, on his left side, his head on a small pillow and his right hand dangling over the white coverlet. He held a rose which the physician had given him from the lapel of his coat. The expression of his features brought to Paul's mind one of Genevieve's early phrases—"Surely he is very droll." The twitching of the mouth hardly disfigured him, being so distinctly a smile rather than a grimace, and the lid of the left eye drooped. It was possible to think of him as winking, especially as the unveiled eye flashed with animation.

As the girl approached he waved the rose and mumbled her name clumsily, yet with a sort of dull chirp. She sank on her knees by the bed, prattled sweetly, fondled and questioned him and seemingly understood the replies that he so imperfectly uttered.

Presently, he motioned to Grattan and to the edge of the bed. Paul seated himself there. The old man looked

at him, held up the rose, pointed to Genevieve and then put out two fingers. The girl, the rose. It was an unmistakable, pantomimic. "Here, my lad, are sisters, mates, two of a kind."

After the mute sally, in which vitality and waggish spirit were in evidence, he showed how strong his will was and how keen its sway. He muttered some request, some command obviously intelligible to Genevieve, who, flushing, shook her head. He continued muttering and twisted the stem of the rose between his fingers. She at last, glancing sidewise at Grattan, said:

"How very absurd. Cousin, he wants to know if you love me?"

"If I—yes, yes, I love you—oh, Genevieve!"

He stammered, faltered. It was not put, therefore, in proper form; perhaps it was more or less badly done, but the voice was his, the accent was somewhat true and the charm of it undeniable. Their hands touched.

Mr. Madama chirped hoarsely, flapping his arm against his thigh; then he began muttering again, and while he

did so the girl's color suddenly ran high.

"No, no—no!" she said.

She gathered her brows, but the gracious lines about her mouth were unbroken. Perverse, gaily insistent, the old man renewed the demand, roguishly tapping the rose against her cheeks and lips. Grattan, as though to discover the palm for which they tilted, leaned toward Genevieve, and she, turning her face and raising her beautiful eyes, repeated the old despot's words as he desired—the exact words, not with the uncle's blunt, thick utterance, but in clear, whispered tones that clothed them with laughing witchery:

"If you love me, Paul," she said, "why don't you kiss me?"

And all the while the physician, sitting by the window, had neither moved nor spoken. He was as still as some great piece of bronze or marble, yet the sunlight was about him and there was sunshine in his heart. He could not choose but observe; he could not choose but listen. He loved romance, music, human voices, flowers, pretty scenes and pictures.



ON AN OLD FRENCH HARPSICHORD

By Thomas Walsh

THEY say that cruel Cupid played
Such havoc with a simple swain,
That from his tears a fount was made
Whence every hapless lad and jade
Might drink and so forget Love's pain.

Thus to that healing brew I bore me
When Imogene my sighs disdained;
But she—young witch!—had been before me,
And not a single drop remained!



I WISH I knew what my wife would say to me when I come home tonight."
"I wish I knew what my wife wouldn't say."

IN EARTHEN VESSELS

By Austin Adams

"WON'T you let me bring you a glass of ice-water, my dear?"

The rich baritone voice rang through the Pullman. The train was crawling, dusty and sluggish, across the desert to the mountain passes and the sea. The heat, the monotony and the powdered alkali had settled upon the spirits of the half-dozen sleeping-car passengers. The voice was a diversion. The nice old lady, who had been too car-sick to notice anything before, raised her head from the gritty pillow. A well-dressed, quiet, bored, citified man, who looked a much-traveled correspondent or pretty well anything observant and aware, stopped his game of solitaire long enough to size up the owner of the voice. Lower 9, a Hebrew drummer, started up from his afternoon nap, winked at the quiet man, and then dozed off again. The two women in mourning seemed to welcome the incident, for the elder dropped her magazine, and the girl sat up, the flowered pattern of the plush head-rest showing on her hot cheek. A vision in a wondrously wrought pink silk kimono and golden hair peeped out from the expensive ennui of the state-room.

Only the one to whom the evangel of ice-water had been proclaimed ignored it. She was a prim little woman with a sweet, patient face, sitting bolt upright at the far end of the car. In her best dress, she was evidently making her first long journey, and taking it, as she apparently took everything, seriously. In spite of the dust and heat, she wore her hat. It was a new hat, an elaborate creation of cotton-backed velvet,

watered-silk ribbons and aggressive roses. It had cost eight dollars at the best milliner's in Enterprise City, Kansas. Her gown, a gray poplin with grass-green facings, made up for the trifling accident of not fitting by giving unmistakable evidences of being brand-new. An overlooked basting thread paralleled one of the rigid seams of the back. Constant use of her pocket-handkerchief had kept almost free from the horrid alkali dust the green velvet facings, at any rate. She did so want to look respectable when the committee from the church should board the train to welcome the new pastor. Then, too, this was no ordinary journey; it was fitting, on the eve of so momentous a change, to preserve a chastened spirit—and as neat an appearance as possible.

Meanwhile, the benign gentleman stood patiently in the narrow passage by the state-room, holding the glass of water in his hand. He was a large, round man of maybe thirty-five, with a kindly, open, smooth face that would have been also strong had it not been for the weak chin. His light brown hair was thrown back from the high forehead and fell in a curly cataract low down on the neck and unpleasantly rubbed against the collar of the broadcloth coat, like his wife's gray poplin, brand-new and hence deserving a better fate. The low-cut waistcoat revealed an expanse of shirt-front; perhaps too glossy to suit the fastidious, but still impressive if a bit rumpled and showing traces of surreptitious wifely laundering in the blistered places where coffee spots had been. An immaculate white tie nestled beneath the low turndown

collar. If a trace of coarseness and lack of breeding marred the general effect of benignity and expansive philanthropy, none but the captious would take note of it—in the face of so much that was distinguished and amiable in the reverend gentleman.

"Won't you let me bring you some water, my dear?" repeated the wonderful voice, this time with a note of insistent consideration which compelled the timid little woman at the other end of the car to notice.

She colored, whether from mere bashfulness or some other less amiable feeling, shook her head emphatically, not to say petulantly, and thought to close the incident by staring fixedly out of the window. Yet was the incident not so easily closed. Her anxiety to avoid attracting attention produced the opposite effect. A third time the persuasive voice besought her to drink. Would nothing ever make him stop showing off before strangers!

"Yes, please, I'd like a drink," came finally, the untruth—why was he always forcing her to be untruthful in company, she his wife and he a minister of the gospel?—in a feeble, apologetic voice quite different from her husband's so sure of itself, its power, its effectiveness and the beneficence of its message.

She was annoyed, chagrined, angry—but aware that several pairs of eyes were taking in the scene through the big looking-glass at the front of the car. Crimson and unhappy, but perfectly the mistress of herself, she smiled herself out of the awkward situation as tactfully as though smiling oneself out of ticklish situations was an every-day affair in the social circles in which a country preacher's wife is obliged to move. If the other women in the car were deceived, not so the knowing man of the world in the first section. He had kept one eye on his game of solitaire and the other on the diverting little comedy, making such inferences as a knowing man of the world will. Also, he studied the woman.

"Ah!" exclaimed the clergyman, his thin, straight lips clipping off the

ejaculation and then stretching into a smile as he made his way down the aisle, balancing skilfully the glass and his own dignified person at each lurch of the car.

The passengers stared frankly at him. He bore the ordeal well. He seemed, in fact, to like it, for he took a long time to make the journey to his thirsty wife, pausing opposite each of the occupied sections as if to gather up the approval and admiration of the eye-witnesses of his exemplary solicitude for his wife's comfort. All of this the waiting wife observed and resented—rather more emphatically than seemed reasonable, thought the shrewd man in the first section, noting events through the mirror. Reasonably or not, the little woman was inwardly boiling by the time her husband reached her with the water she did not want. He, too, when no longer visible to their fellow-passengers, exchanged his air of general benevolence for one of specific irritation.

"Sh-h!" With a finger at his lips he warned her to speak low.

"You'll be telling them your name next!" sneered the wife in a whisper behind the tumbler held for appearances to her lips. "And that you've just had a call to a big church, at two thousand a year! It's a downright sin, Wesley Milker—the way you always show off before strangers, a sin! Why do you?"

"If I had listened to you," retorted he, "we'd be stuck in Dodd's Center, or Athens, or Enterprise City, or some of those mud-holes yet, starving to death!"

"And lots happier'n we are now, Wesley, and nearer to God—and among our own kind of folks—and little Beulah alive maybe—and—"

The little wife's bitter words, spoken with rising fervor and threatened with tears, were suddenly stopped by the big soft hand which the husband clapped rudely enough over her mouth.

"Hush! Can't you talk without yelling?" he muttered. "Do have sense! They'll all be wondering what we're scrapping-about in a minute. And do

for goodness' sake hurry up and let me take that glass back!"

She gave him the glass and watched him as he walked away. In the distant mirror she could see that the look which she alone ever saw on his face was gone the instant he stood up; in its place there had returned that other look, of sincere sympathy and eager interest in his fellow-men, which had won for the Rev. Wesley Milker his hosts of friends and admirers and the reputation of being the most affecting funeral preacher in Kansas. Now he leaned over the car-sick old lady and murmured something helpful about the opportunities given us during seasons of illness and suffering; then he asked the widow if she or her dear daughter would care to look over some copies of the *Week-Day Christian*; apologized effusively to the Hebrew drummer for having spilled a few drops of ice-water on his bald spot, nodded affably to the other man, smiled toward the invisible occupant of the state-room, and finally disappeared around the corner beyond the passage.

"Now he's happy," murmured his wife sadly; "he's made every single soul in the whole car look at him!"

The career of the Rev. Wesley Milker had been almost meteoric—for Kansas. As a preacher, he was a success from the very start. As an actor, essaying melodramatic rôles, he would, no doubt, have proved quite as successful. His really beautiful voice, vibrating with sympathy, his mobile features, his magnetism, his imagination, and withal his genuine love of men and heartfelt interest in the sick, the unfortunate and the sorrowing, sent him forth as a youthful evangelist among the simple people of the plains, certain of a welcome, a following, and the sure rewards of a sower of the seed. His harvest of conversions and good works made him famous, and ever larger and more important pulpits called him away from smaller and less important. Everybody in Kansas had heard or heard of the "boy preacher of Dodd's Center" long before he became the pastor of Athens and then of Enterprise City and,

lately, of a church in Topeka itself. No preacher in the State was so sought after at revival times and at obsequies, especially when the circumstances were unusually harrowing, he was matchless.

It was during a revival at Dodd's Center, when she was only twenty, that Agnes Warner was converted by the young pastor, and folks soon noticed that the queer, dreamy, supposedly unhappy girl had undergone not alone a spiritual awakening, but a complete change of nature and temperament. It wasn't long before everybody could see how things were going; the big, sweet, sad eyes of the girl clearly looked upon the popular young minister as the very gentle perfect knight who had been sent to glorify and uplift and unfold her poor little narrow country life. They were married within a year—and she awoke. To her, so utterly unwilling to see and so cruelly crushed by the sight, was revealed the other side of her husband's character, sordid, vain, ambitious for mere worldly success, inordinately craving applause, fretful in poverty, ever scheming for preferment, jealous, untruthful in little matters of every-day life, selfish, brutally inconsiderate of her at times—oh, it was terrible, bitter, killing, that awakening of hers at the very threshold of her married life!

Now, as she was being led forward to the untried years so full of anxious forebodings for her and of fame and importance for Wesley, Agnes let her mind run back to the old times when he was a struggling evangelist in the lonesome villages of Eagle County. What bitter years those were! How pinching poverty had seemed to degrade him! He chafed so under it and schemed so to attract attention in the hope of getting a call to a rich town charge. And oh, how cruelly he had treated her during those solemn, wondrous months when she waited for the awful hour of motherhood! When the bills came in, or anything went wrong at that time, he stormed at her and asked her how she supposed he could afford to have children. Then little Beulah came. Luckily, Beulah lived only a

few months. Folks still talk about the sermon Wesley preached at his baby's funeral; but Agnes knew the cruel truth—and no other babies ever came. Always, always, there had been Wesley's scheming and planning and showing off to get that call to a bigger church, and acting as though it was her fault that his salary couldn't be made to cover expenses.

Then, too, after he had forced himself forward and money matters were no longer quite so trying, he seemed to grow ashamed of her old-fashioned country manners, and scolded her for shrinking from taking the active lead in church work which the pastor's wife always takes—unless she's a country gawk! He had called her a country gawk so often after they moved to the Topeka church! What could she hope, now that they were going to that fashionable congregation in Los Angeles, where—she just *knew* it!—she would be a hindrance and not a help to him in his work? If preachers today were only like the apostles, and money and fine airs and folks' social position didn't count!

Still, Wesley was certainly a great preacher! She wouldn't deny that. She knew of hundreds, literally hundreds, of poor, troubled, sin-sick, disheartened people whom he had saved by his wonderful telling of the message. Yes, Wesley Milker was a power for righteousness; who was she that she should criticize so able an instrument of the Lord? Was it not he who had brought her own sinful soul to God? But oh, if he would only—

"I'm sorry, dear, that I was so mean and contrary about the water," she said when he came back and sat down by her.

"Never mind, dear. Is your headache better?"

She took his big hand between her own thin ones. His forgiveness always cicatrized a wound at once.

"Aren't you sleepy?" she asked after a moment or two. "Why don't you go and have a nap in the smoking-compartment as you did yesterday? Do!"

"Guess I will."

She helped him off with his broadcloth coat and on with his linen duster; and he went away to have his nap. She brushed the new coat—it had cost a positively sinful sum—folded it carefully, laid it on the rack beside the bandbox containing his virgin silk hat, and resigned herself to rather gloomy forecastings of how it was going to be among those fashionable rich folks at Los Angeles. Suddenly, she became aware that somebody was standing in the aisle and looking at her. She glanced up timidly. It was the gentleman who had been playing cards all day in the front seat. He was staring at her and evidently thought that he knew her. She held his eye too boldly, she feared, but his face seemed so familiar.

"Surely," he said quietly, "this is Agnes—"

"Arthur Nicholson!" she cried, getting to her feet and holding out her hands, which he grasped and held long, "where on earth did you come from?"

"Oh, anybody is likely to run across a rolling stone like me," he laughed. "I'm afraid it's you, Aggie, that haven't strayed very far from home—dear old Dodd's, how's everybody in that centre of culture and progress?"

"Shame on you, Arthur! But I haven't been in Dodd's Center for ages—nearly three years. No, we've been living—my husband and I—in Topeka. But now do sit down and visit for a few minutes. I can't tell you how glad I am to see you again!"

For a whole hour they told each other what the years had brought to them since they had graduated together from the high school. Her story was easy to tell; his not so easy. Yet he told it to her so simply and frankly that even her narrow little mind was able to comprehend the distance he had traveled from the raw, impulsive boy of nineteen who intended to be a clerk in a store at Enterprise City, to the quiet, cultured, distinguished-looking man of thirty-three who lived in New York and was beginning to be famous as an author,

and had a trace of gray over his ears, and dressed like a millionaire or at least a city gentleman, and had been around the world more than once, and—and—well, and who had left her so far behind!

"And you've never married, Arthur?" she asked, looking far out over the desert as if it were the waste of barren years that separated her from the girl he had once known and thought that he loved.

"No," he replied, betrayed out of his previous reserve and ease by her sudden change of subject and manner, "I meant what I said to you, Agnes, on that night—what an eternity ago it seems!—when you told me that I might carry away with me into the battle of life the hope that some day you might care for me. Less than two years afterwards I heard that you had married. So I—well, I drifted about, you know, never caring for anybody enough to think of marriage; and now, of course, I'm a hopeless old bachelor. I hope you've been very happy."

She sat a little straighter, if possible, and Nicholson's discerning eye detected that in allowing himself to verge on the sentimental he had made an unfortunate mistake. He had meant nothing by it. Least of all to give her the idea that their foolish boy-and-girl high-school romance in the long buried antiquity at Dodd's Center had really cast a shadow over his eminently sane emotions or affected the current of his career in any serious way. But as he observed the effect of his innocent little coquetry he realized that his offhand estimate of the demure, severely prim and repellantly conscientious wife of a country preacher was inadequate, to say the least. He had been trying, ever since he recognized her, to understand how in the name of reason he had ever imagined himself in love with a walking exponent of all the counsels of perfection. Her big, sad eyes were still all that he fancied them in the callow days of old—beautiful, hungry, passionate eyes—but the rest of her! Good heavens!

But manifestly he now was obliged to suspect under this frigid propriety, not to say polar austerity, beneath all this rural innocence and inexperience, smoldered all the usual volcanic stuff. He might have known this; she was a woman, too, who at eighteen had dreamed and yearned and aspired with the best of them. She had evidently watched the slowly dying embers of her girl's heart on the cold hearthstone of real life—and now he, like a blundering idiot, had with a careless word, spoken in jest, fanned back to life an uncomfortable spark. And her next words finished him.

"No, Arthur," she murmured, turning and looking calmly into his eyes and fairly torturing him with regret for his folly, "no, I'm not happy—far from it!"

"Oh, Lord!" he groaned inwardly; "she's not going to blame me for it, is she?"

"If I didn't know you so well," she went on, as blissful as if she really knew him, "it would be sinful for me to speak this way; but I know you'll understand."

He nodded. He had found that it hurts one's conscience less, somehow, to nod a lie than to speak it.

"Wesley—that's my dear husband, you know—is too good to me, but for some time I have felt how unworthy I am and that his work would be so much more successful if he didn't have me. Yes, dear Arthur, and—and—and— You won't think me wicked if I tell you, will you? Sometimes—not often, but *sometimes*, I feel that it is all a punishment sent to me for not having married you."

The tears which had been gathering began to trickle down her thin, sallow cheeks—and Nicholson was as wretched as he remembered ever to have been in his life. Mercifully, the porter sang out at that moment that passengers for the Grand Canyon must change cars at the next station. Here was his long neglected opportunity to see one of the wonders of the world—and to escape from—what?

"Well, dear old girl," he said cheerily

as he returned to bid her good-bye, "I wish you all the happiness in the world in your new home! Cut out all this nonsense of thinking yourself unworthy. No man could be worthy of you, Aggie! And if you ever need a friend—here's my address! Good-bye!"

He was gone before she could tell him something that was in her mind, but he turned and smiled when she called out a "God bless you!" to him through the window. The train moved on; the new passengers stowed their belongings and themselves in the empty sections; Wesley came back yawning and stretching his arms; and the little woman in the last seat shut up once more the petals of old memories, so unexpectedly stirred into false bloom, and settled down, sadder and more silent than usual, for the last weary night of the long journey.

The committee from the Los Angeles church boarded the train the next day at San Bernardino. To the new pastor's manifest delight, but his wife's no little confusion, each of the committee had thought it only fitting to bring along his wife; so that Agnes, without a moment's warning or any opportunity to tidy up, found herself the object of exacting scrutiny to half-a-dozen women, all stylishly gowned and almost un-Christianly worldly in their appearance. Still, they were ever so sweet and kind to her, even if she did catch one or two of them criticizing her when they did not know that she could hear. The trustees themselves were awfully good to her, giving her fruit and hoping that she would find the parsonage comfortable. Only Wesley was unkind.

In the seventh heaven of importance, he talked about his plans for paying off the mortgage, increasing the membership, interesting the young people, turning the church into a live, up-to-date institutional parish, and saving souls—talking so loudly that everybody in the car could hear him. When they finally reached Los Angeles and had been escorted to the new parsonage—a large house sumptuously furnished, Agnes thought—Wesley, nervously wrought up by the achievement of the

dizzy summit of years of effort, or upset by the trying events of the day, found relief for his feelings by turning upon Agnes.

"One thing's certain," he declared, when she put on the old apron to get supper, "you've got to learn somehow, the Lord only knows how *you* can ever learn it, to look a little more like a lady and less like a country gawk!"

If he had said anything but that! In her then state of mind she would have better endured a blow. She did not reply, but got supper, washed up the things after it, complained of a headache, and went upstairs to bed. But she could not get to sleep; the strange room, quite the biggest and most magnificent she had ever occupied, made her feel uncomfortable. Then, too, Wesley stayed down in his study very late, working at the great sermon to be delivered tomorrow night—the first in his new pulpit. And gnawing at her heart was the quickly strengthening conviction that it was only she who stood now in the way of his perfect success. She knew it. And Wesley showed only too plainly that he felt it. Unable to bear it all any longer, she suddenly sprang out of bed and slipped on her wrapper, intending to run downstairs and tell him that she was going away—back to her people, to Topeka where she could get work, anywhere!

At the top of the stairs she stopped. Wesley was pacing up and down his study and she could hear him repeating fervent passages from his sermon; she could not break in on him then. And, anyhow, what was the use of telling him? He would only storm at her and accuse her of wanting to wreck his career, whereas she ought to stand by him and bring herself to his way of thinking. No! It would be foolish to talk it over with him. She would steal away quietly tomorrow, and he could explain to the trustees that her health made it necessary for her to go back home for a time. She turned on the light and wrote him a letter. It was a short letter and simple. She told him not to worry; that it was all

for the best; that he must always think of her as praying for his success; and that he must try to forgive her for all the trouble she had given him, though really and truly she had always tried to be a good and true wife and a help to him. She knew that she could never satisfy him in his new church, so she had gone away. That was all. Then she went back to bed and was sound asleep when Wesley came.

The next day was Sunday. At the morning service Wesley was installed. Quite a dozen pastors took part in the impressive exercises, and as they and their wives stayed for dinner Agnes had her hands full. That letter in her pocketbook seemed to take all the bitterness out of the otherwise trying day; by this time tomorrow, she kept telling herself, she would be gone, and Wesley would be free to fulfil his great mission.

Night came. Wesley went into the church and she pinned the letter to his pillow; he would find it there when he came to bed. Then she put a few of her things into a handbag, and waited for the music to begin in the brightly lighted church next door. She would go down to the station and take the first train East. At last the organ swelled forth and a thousand voices rose in praise. Agnes hesitated. Perhaps it would be easier if she slipped into church and asked God to give her strength. Scarcely anybody knew her by sight; she could sit far back under the gallery—and leave before the service was over.

Wesley was offering the prayer when she entered the church. It was a simple, humble prayer, pathetic in its appeal for guidance in his new work; scores of eyes were wet before he was done, her own among them. The church was thronged; every eye was upon the handsome young pastor when, finally, he rose to preach. Agnes leaned forward as he announced his text: "*This treasure have we in earthen vessels.*"

He spoke very low at first, but that gentle, soothing, strangely affecting voice carried to every part of the building. He told his people what the treasure was—the blessed knowledge of God's love and that this love yearns to bring each of us safe within its saving care. That was all that he meant to preach to them—the love of our heavenly Father. Then he illustrated God's ways of manifesting His love; faster and deeper ran the torrent of his beautiful thought, quickening, inspiring, comforting, saving. It was a masterful effort; but, then, all his sermons were. His argument done, Wesley stopped dramatically. Everybody sat hushed and expectant; and then in tones throbbing with sincerity and Christian humility the pastor threw himself, as it were, upon the mercy and loving toleration of his new flock. He was nothing; he was human like themselves; he was but an earthen vessel used by the Father; it was His message only that they must consider. His voice broke more than once. Old church-goers looked at one another; they had heard the most searching sermon of their lives.

Far back in the church, Agnes sat and listened. The message had shot itself into her heart. What had she always been doing but just this forgetting the message and finding flaws in the vessel containing it? While the collection was being taken up she slipped out into the vestibule. Many people were already coming down the stairs from the gallery. Among them she spied Arthur Nicholson. Thank God! he had not seen her. She fled from the church and from the mouth of a pit which seemed suddenly to yawn in front of her.

"Wesley," she whispered, when she put her arms around the tired pastor's neck before he dropped asleep, "if you'll help me I'm going to try not to make you feel ashamed of me any more."

R&N

THE SHURTLEFF DINNERS

By Frederick Herron

IT was the last sentence of the notice sent out by Buffum, the secretary of the Vagabond Club, in which the members took the greatest interest:

The next dinner of the Vagabond Club will come off, wind, wave and weather permitting, on Thursday, November 14th.

The special lion will be Mr. Edgar S. Northrop. Members are assured that he is goodtempered, well-trained, and will not bite if treated kindly.

Congratulations and condolences will also be in order on the engagement of whom the newspapers misguidedly call "the eminent lawyer," our benedick brother, Shurtleff.

Although Northrop was a distinguished actor, and had always been a favorite guest at the club, it was on account of Shurtleff that the members were looking eagerly forward to the dinner. Shurtleff's hand was already numb from the vigorous grasp of his friends; but the true good wishes of Vagabondian comradeship had not yet been given to him in true Vagabondian fashion.

Harry Shurtleff was, without question, the most popular man in the club. There were many members wittier, jollier and more talented, but Shurtleff's modesty, his hearty good-fellowship, the quiet charm of his manner, combined with his undoubted ability, had won for him from his friends a degree of love almost equal to that which a man ordinarily reserves for the woman of his heart. And they were all sure that this girl who had stolen him away from them was in no way worthy of him. It is probable, however, that they would have held the same opinion regarding any girl whom Shurtleff might have chosen to place ahead of his friends. But many of

them had in addition an uneasy feeling that the whole affair had been too sudden, too impetuous, too youthful almost; that it lacked the necessary firm foundation on which the joy of a man's whole life should be built.

It was at a house-party given by Mrs. Lawrence that Shurtleff, Holcombe and Leland had met Ethel Hollister. She was not more than twenty years old, small, fair and graceful, with an airy, inconsequential way of treating men and things which came from a knowledge of the world confined to that circumscribed portion of it within which she had blossomed for two years.

Loving Shurtleff as they did, Holcombe and Leland were not at all surprised that Miss Hollister should be instantly and powerfully attracted by him. But they had felt a distinct shock when they perceived that almost from the outset Shurtleff's own heart seemed to be captured by this slip of a girl. Mrs. Lawrence herself had regarded the affair with some astonishment, for she knew that Ethel Hollister was reputed to be engaged already to young Lester Framleigh, who was also one of her guests. And the morose aspect of Framleigh, as he watched the older man monopolizing Miss Hollister's attention more and more, certainly gave authority to the report. Then one November afternoon, hardly a month from his first meeting with Ethel Hollister, Harry Shurtleff had come up to a little knot of men sitting at the club and had announced with an air that was a combination of shamefacedness and assumed bravado, "Well, boys, I'm engaged."

Whether the girl was worthy of him

or not, there could be no doubt that she had made him happy, happier than they had ever seen him before. That achievement alone almost redeemed her in the estimation of his friends. For Shurtleff walked, talked, and did his business with such a glorified air, there emanated from him such an atmosphere of complete bliss, that, notwithstanding the monotony of subject in his conversation, his mere bodily presence with them seemed almost to solve the whole problem of life. His face wore such a perpetual smile that they longed to catch him asleep to see if it vanished even then. The attitude which he took toward his own condition would have led one to suppose that engagements were a new invention of his own, and now patented by him for his sole use. And yet, notwithstanding all this, his friends were not entirely satisfied that she was the girl for him. One thing in particular made Leland nervously apprehensive. He spoke of it to Holcombe as they walked home after a call upon her.

"She appreciates him," he had said; "she appreciates him, but not in the right way. She's proud of him and all that, but she's proud of him in just the same way she glories in her new engagement ring. She sees that she's got possession of the brilliant genius, that she's the envy of most other women, but she doesn't yet know the man himself. He's a new, and glorious, and expensive toy, and she's a child who is playing with it until she gets tired."

"Oh, you're pessimistic," Holcombe had replied.

"No," Leland had said seriously; "you mark my words, she doesn't care for him yet in the right way—not in the way Shurtleff cares for her. I don't say that she will not do this in time. But she doesn't now. There's something that isn't there in her; and that worries me."

Leland had not known that Shurtleff was contemplating a trip to Europe until he met Holcombe on the street on the day when Buffum's notice of the dinner was sent out.

"Yes, he's been called over on business. Poor man, he feels bad about going. He'd give up almost anything of his own to stay here; but this has something to do with one of his trust estates. He sails on the *Galatea* early Saturday morning. He's going over to New York on Friday noon after the dinner. Did you know that they've fixed the wedding for immediately upon his return in January? This will be his last bachelor dinner at the Vagabond."

"The wedding in January? He is in a hurry, isn't he? But after all I'm glad there's to be no delay. By the way," Leland had replied, "I was walking up past the Hollister house the other day, and I saw that young Framleigh coming out."

"Framleigh? Who's he?"

"Why, don't you remember the somber youth we met down at Mrs. Lawrence's—the man whom Ethel Hollister was supposed to have thrown over in favor of old Harry?"

"Oh, that man! What do you suppose he's doing around there now? It's like a ghost haunting the scene of his murder, isn't it? There must be little satisfaction in that practice for an unsuccessful lover," Holcombe had said. And then as he turned to leave, "Don't forget, we three lunch together the day Shurtleff leaves."

"All right," Leland had answered, "I'll be there."

The dinner had certainly been a glorious success so far—one of the most brilliant that the many old members who were present could remember. The newer members sat with mouths agape at the jests and the repartee flung up and down and across the table. Old Joshua Manningly, the president, was in his best form that night; and no one had escaped from his incisive sarcasm and his double-edged flattery. All had sat down with riotous enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm had increased in mathematical ratio as each new course came upon the table. The sole rule of the club was that there should be no rules—the Vagabondian paradox. Its boast was

that it had no constitution. Therefore, speaking began or left off at any period in the dinner when fancy dictated; and any unlucky guest who imagined that time would be afforded to him, at least until the coffee was served, in which to think up his "impromptu" speech, was generally disconcerted by being called to his feet in the middle of the entrées.

That night Northrop, the actor, was introduced during the fish course, but he had been the club's guest several times, and he was not taken unawares. His speech, delivered in his peculiar, jerky and very emphatic style, had been appropriate to the occasion, containing no sentences which required even one-quarter of a second to digest.

"I am going to talk only a minute——"

"Thank God!" came from somewhere.

"—on the evanescence——"

"Spell it!" shouted Buffum. "Shoot him in cold blood!" called another. "Disgusting display of vocabulary," came from another direction.

"—on the evanescence——"

"Second and last offense," Manningly said threateningly.

"Evanescence—I can't use that word when I'm in Delaware. It's so long it goes over the State boundary and has to be extradited," continued Northrop unabashed—"evanescence of human pride and happiness." And then he told a little story of his theatrical experience.

"There's a moral in that for you, too, Shurtleff, my boy, you proud and happy youngster," a member called across the table. Shurtleff's ever-present smile, however, continued to light up his face.

Then De Forest rose and made his ninth speech of the evening on—no one knew exactly what.

"No one asked you to talk," a member said; and another rose and moved that De Forest be expelled from the club. The motion was put and unanimously carried and De Forest bowed and uttered his heartfelt, solemn thanks for the honor.

"Mr. President and gentlemen,"

shouted Holcombe above the uproar.

"Sir, I dislike the discrimination implied in your remarks," said the president.

"Mr. President and other gentlemen," renewed Holcombe.

The president bowed. "The amendment is accepted."

"I move you, sir——"

"You can't do it." "You're not strong enough," came the interruptions.

"—that we now proceed to the business of the evening——"

"Mr. Holcombe offers to pay for free champagne," said the president, turning to the head waiter. "That is the business, I believe."

"—of the evening, referring to the present enraptured condition of our brother Vagabondian, Harry Shurtleff."

At the mention of the name the whole club rose to its feet, and cheers came from all sides. Every man's glass was raised. "Dear old Harry!" "Harry, old man!" "Here's to you!" "Now with me!" "God bless you, old fellow!" Shurtleff sat motionless, as if dazed by the tumult. Then, for the first time, his face became grave and he seemed overwhelmed at the heartiness of the good-will which shone in everyone's eyes. When the noise subsided and they sat down some began singing, and all joined in the old "For he's a jolly good fellow," and they sang it as only men who mean every word of it can sing.

Then Holcombe rose, tall and gaunt, out of the tangled mass of men, and began to speak in a sober voice. The hall was as still as a sick-room. With great seriousness, with no idle jest, and with the most perfect aptness and sympathy, he told Shurtleff how much he was to each of them and to the whole club. He told him how they all rejoiced at the fact of his happiness, and envied him the joy that had come into his life; how they all blamed themselves because they hadn't been able to bring as much to him, and that it had remained for a helpless girl to do that. He told him how they knew that the

club would never have the same hold upon him that it had before; how something else far better and higher would now have first place in his heart. "But then," he said, "Harry, old man, there'll be some night when perhaps *she* won't be with you, and when perhaps you'll feel just a little lonely, and then you'll look in on us and you'll find us just the same—no, not just the same—even more glad to see you and have you with us than we are now. And so," his voice trembled a little, "Shurtleff, dear, good old Shurtleff, we drink to you now. We don't wish you happiness because you've got all of that you can hold. But we wish you a continuance of that happiness all your life, every day, and every hour, and every minute of it, and—and—well, I guess that's all. Now—Harry—you old fool, get up and say something, can't you?"

With this rather confused and lame ending, Holcombe sat down; and everyone said it was the best speech he had ever made. And they all rose again, and drank, and hammered the table, until the plates and glasses jumped up and down, clinking and clattering.

Shurtleff was pushed, and shoved, and hoisted to his feet by his neighbors beside him, and stood silent, nervously tearing his dinner card. He took a glass of water and still remained silent, while they could see his face twitch as he tried to regain control of himself. Finally he said with his old-time drawl, but in a half-smothered voice:

"Brothers of the Vagabond, I—I don't know what to say. And yet I ought to say something. I can't thank you. You see I can't, as I want to."

"Go ahead; you're doing first-rate," called out a man across the table; but his interruption met with frowns and admonitions to "shut up."

"I don't know whether you all have met my—my heart's desire."

"Good! good!" they cried.

"But I think you'll take my word for it when I say that I am the luckiest man that ever lived, and tonight the happiest. I don't deserve it all; God knows, I don't deserve her."

Holcombe and Leland exchanged

glances. They felt that the luck and the unworthiness were all on the other side.

"But I've got her. By God's help I'll try to make myself what I ought to be, for her. You fellows remember Van Ness's poem that he read here last Spring about Vagabondian Loves. You recall that he described how unlucky all of us seemed to have been in love, judging from the attitude and tone of the love ditties read at this table—how almost all our poems dwelt on the unfaithfulness of some fairy female, or on the jilting of some woebegone swain, or were Lays to Lost Loves. Well, I'm the beginning of a new era; but though now I can't write a poem of woe or of hard luck in love, I can't guarantee that my love isn't unlucky in loving me."

"Oh, oh, false modesty, thy name is Shurtleff!"

"Never, never!" flew the interjections.

"And so," continued Shurtleff, his old smile returning, "perhaps you won't think me too presumptuous and too one-ideaed if I ask you to drink a return toast with me, a toast which ought to be appropriate for each one of you; and if it does not fit, the sooner you, each one of you, imitate my good example and put yourself in a position where it will fit, the better man you'll each of you be. I ask you all, brethren, to rise and drink, 'To the Girl who loves a Vagabondian.'"

They all jumped up with a cheer, and the wine slopped over their glasses as they drank with a zest, and cheered; and then drank again, and cheered. And all the while Shurtleff sat back in his chair with his smile of perfect joy and delight.

Then Northrop rose again, although informed that he had "already spoken once," and that "children should be seen, not heard," and said that he hoped Mr. Shurtleff would not subject himself, in making love, to the comment made upon him, Northrop. He told how he had received a letter complaining that, when on the stage, he always addressed his proposals to the lady behind her back, and made love

to her back hair. On thinking over his plays, he found out that unconsciously this had been his habit. His female correspondent objected bitterly to this mode of procedure as being unfair on the girl who was thus prevented from seeing his face, and from judging whether he was in earnest.

After Northrop had sat down, amid a deathly silence and audibly querulous questionings among the members where the joke lay in his remarks, a popular and very grave judge of the Supreme Court rose, and said the occasion reminded him of a burlesque love poem. Unfortunately it only reminded him of the first four lines. At the fifth line his memory gave out.

"And close by stood an ancient," he repeated three times.

"The bench seems to have difficulty in getting by the bar of that inn," De Forest said in a low and musing tone. A shout went up around the table, and the judge resumed his seat, which action was greeted by a burst of hand-clapping.

Then Grantham set off a bunch of his crackling aphorisms, more or less appropriate to the occasion—among them, "Where singleness is bliss 'tis folly to have wives," and "A little widow is a dangerous thing." Someone told a story, regarding which the best comment was made by Van Ness, that it was "received with that cordiality with which we always greet an old friend."

And so the evening passed by. Salters sang a rollicking song with his delightful tenor voice; and the loving-cup was brought on. The famous old toast, "Here's to one another—and to one other," was drunk. Then, after a few stories, the dinner broke up, without formal motion, but by the gradual drifting away of members in congenial groups.

"Good-bye, Harry, old man." "Good luck to you." "Hope you'll have a pleasant trip." "Good-bye, Harry." They crowded up to shake his hand; and then the room became empty.

Holcombe, Shurtleff and Leland strolled down the street together. Shurtleff seemed like a man in a dream,

so saturated was he with pleasure at the good comradeship and the hearty wishes of the evening. The three stood under an arc-lamp in front of Leland's quarters, chatting.

"Won't you come in, Harry, just for a minute, and have a final stirrup-cup?" Leland asked.

"You forget," Holcombe said, "we're all three going to lunch tomorrow."

"Oh, by the way, Holcombe," Shurtleff broke out, "I entirely forgot to tell you fellows I can't lunch with you tomorrow, because I'm going to New York tonight, in just half an hour." He looked at his watch.

"Look here, that's too bad," said Holcombe. "What are you going to do that for?"

"Why, I find that I must be in New York tomorrow to attend to some important business. I sail, you know, at four o'clock in the morning, Saturday. I thought that I could fix it up by going on tomorrow noon, but I need more time, so I've changed my plans."

"How did Miss Hollister like your going on to New York this way a day earlier, and leaving her before you meant to?" Leland said laughingly.

"She doesn't know anything about it. You know she was obliged to go off to Washington herself yesterday to see her mother, who's sick. I said good-bye to her then."

"Do you mean to say that you stayed back here away from her for this dinner?" asked Holcombe.

"Well, not wholly. I really couldn't get away from here a minute sooner. It was pretty hard, though, I can tell you, letting her go off on Wednesday, when I wasn't to sail until Saturday."

"You're a real hero, Harry," Leland said. "You'll write her tonight about your change of plans, and all about the dinner?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

"Well, don't forget to put in all the nice things that were said. Don't be too modest, old fellow. Those are the things that will please her."

Leland looked at his watch.

"Are you going over to your rooms, Harry?" he asked. "Because if you

are you haven't got any extra time to spare."

"Oh, no," he said, "I locked everything up over there this afternoon, and cleared out. I had my baggage sent over to the station early, so that I could meet Manningly and Northrop at the Arnold Club before we went down to the dinner. What time is it?"

"Eleven thirty-five."

"So late? Well, I suppose I ought to be going." There was great reluctance and regret in his voice. "Good-bye, old man—until January second."

Leland gripped his hand. "Good-bye, and all kinds of good luck, Harry, and hurry back home," he said.

Holcombe took his hand. "Harry," he said, "I meant what I said tonight, you know. It wasn't a speech. I meant it. You understand?"

"Oh, that's all right. Of course—and thank you, old man; you know how much," answered Shurtleff. "Good-bye"—"Good-bye"—"Good-bye," came from them all; and then Harry Shurtleff walked away.

As he turned they could see his eyes and they felt that they had never seen a more completely happy man.

That was Thursday night, November fourteenth. It was on the afternoon of Wednesday, the twentieth, that the usual little coterie of men had gathered in the lounging-room of the Arnold Club. The tinkle of the clock on the wall over the blazing wood fire announced half-past five. They were lazily watching the stream of business men and belated shoppers returning home through the twilight. They saw Buffum come down the street and up the steps of the club, and there was a curious look on his face. He joined them amid casual and jovial greetings. He held up his hand to quell the noise.

"You haven't heard the news, then?" he said, with a choking voice.

"What news? What's the matter, Buff?"

He paused, and there was the complete stillness of anticipation in the room. Then he said without further preliminary:

"The *Galatea* has gone down—only one boatload of passengers saved."

"Great God!" someone cried. The rest sat silent and chilled.

"And Harry Shurtleff?" It was Holcombe's voice, but one would hardly have recognized it.

"His name is not among those saved."

A sound of laughter drifted in from the hallway. Then they began to talk together in strained whispers.

Later bulletins confirmed the horrible report. The *Galatea*, two days out from New York, had collided with a large iceberg in the night-time, and had gone straight to the bottom. The second mate, the purser and a dozen passengers had escaped in one boat. All the rest, officers, crew and passengers, were lost; and Harry Shurtleff was dead.

"Do you remember, Roger, how the dear old fellow looked that night when we said 'good-bye'?" Holcombe said to Leland, three days afterward, when the truth of the news was absolutely established. "Did you ever see a happier being in your life?"

Holcombe was the executor named in Shurtleff's will; and he had asked Leland, as one of Harry's most intimate friends, to go up to Shurtleff's rooms with him, when he started to take charge of his papers and effects. It was a painful thing to do, but Leland had felt that possibly he might be of some service, and so he had accompanied him. The old housekeeper had met them, and said, with a sob: "Ye'll find everything of Mr. Harry's just as he left it, the blessed soul; and there is two letters on his desk that came for him the evening he left, which I was going to forward to Europe for him. Ye know he changed his plans and went over to New York earlier, and he didn't leave me any address. They'll be there all right on his desk."

They entered his room as if they were entering a church—that room in which they had passed so many confidential, careless, jovial evenings. It looked the same, but it never would be the

same again. They talked in whispers as Holcombe unlocked the desk-drawers and looked over the papers. Everywhere around the room, on the table, the mantelpiece, the desk, were photographs of Ethel Hollister.

Leland gave a start as the thought suddenly occurred to him that, in the intensity of his personal grief, he had not attempted to call upon her. He wondered whether she was in town or still in Washington. As he stood by the fireplace looking painfully at the last picture that Harry had had taken, a photograph of himself and Miss Hollister together, he heard Holcombe utter a violent exclamation followed by a groan. Turning around, he saw him staring vacantly at an open letter, one of the two upon the desk.

"What's the matter?" Leland said. "Anything serious?" Holcombe seemed about to offer the letter to him; then he drew back, folded it up, and returning it to the envelope placed it in his pocket. His face was white, and almost as if from anger.

"What is it?" Leland repeated.

"It's a letter," Holcombe said, "which I found here for Shurtleff, and which—well, which I think perhaps I'd better not show you, at least not now."

Leland was surprised at the confusion and emotion in his manner. But he saw on looking intently at Holcombe's rigid face that perhaps it would be wiser not to press the matter further at present. He retained, however, considerable curiosity to know what it could have been that had stirred Holcombe so deeply.

The funeral was held a few days after that. The church was crowded with men, and although Shurtleff was comparatively young in his profession there were judges of the Supreme Court, clerks of the courts, leaders of the Bar, and what was more significant, elevator men from his office building and from the court-house, minor courtroom officials, tradesmen with whom he dealt, and his club associates, all mingled together. Never had Leland and Holcombe understood so perfectly

his lovable character as during that hour when they sat in the dimly lighted church and watched all those men in diverse walks of life assembled to show their personal affection for him. And Ethel Hollister was there, not dressed in the deepest of mourning, but very pale and stricken in her look.

About two weeks later the members received a notice containing simply the bare announcement that the next dinner of the Vagabond Club would be held on Thursday, December twelfth. With the recollection of the last dinner vivid in him, Leland had been unable to bring himself to the point of deciding to go, until he had met Frank Holcombe on the day before the dinner.

"You ought to go, Roger. We all ought to go, because Harry would have wished it. You know how he loved the club, and how he would have disliked the thought that his death should in any way break up our meetings. The club must show its appreciation of his feelings."

Leland knew that he was right, and so they went together on the evening of the twelfth. But on looking round the room where they were accustomed to assemble, he shivered as if a cold wind had swept in through it from the sea; for it seemed so empty without him there to squeeze their hands with unaffected gladness at seeing them again. Each member as he arrived appeared to have a subdued air of wanting to say something and yet of suppressing his real thought by force of will. A few mentioned openly Harry Shurtleff's name. But those who knew him best kept ominously silent in respect to him. The fact was that the place was so full of association that no one of them dared trust his own emotions.

As they went into the dining-hall they noticed half-way down the table a chair, in front of which stood a battered pewter beer-mug. It was the place where he had sat in November. The mug was his, well remembered for years back. Tonight they left the chair unoccupied. When they all were seated at the board and touched

elbows; when each felt the helpful presence of his neighbor, a little of the true Vagabondian cheer gradually returned. The jokes began to be flung out again wildly. Good-natured abuse and cutting quips met each man who ventured to speak a few words loud enough to be heard by the others. A new member was initiated, and his initial attempt at literary productions was received with all the old-time opprobrium, insults and derision. As Van Ness said in mock flattery, "I congratulate Mr. Pentthrow on dipping into poetry and emerging still conscious, although only partly intelligible." One of the club bores read a lengthy and didactic essay, evidently intended to be humorous, which was received in discouraging and stony silence.

The merriment seemed to reach even a higher pitch than on many previous evenings. But those who knew the men intimately felt that it was all feverish, almost strained; that each was vying with his neighbor, as if afraid lest the one and only topic of which all were thinking should be mentioned. De Forest had risen and was speaking rather wildly and disconnectedly when suddenly—crash!—crash!!! The president's gavel fell on the table with such force that a bottle by his side toppled over. Unheeding, Manningly rose with a very serious face.

"Brethren—" he said. "Excuse me, De Forest, will you not please sit down?" This unwonted courtesy so confused De Forest that he dropped heavily into his chair. "Brethren, why keep up this ghastly farce of pretense? We have watched one another trying in vain by joke or jest to drive out of his mind the one thought which holds us all tonight. But why avoid it? Why not be honest? We are here because we loved Harry Shurtleff."

The men breathed deep all along the table. Leland saw Holcombe and Buffum wipe the perspiration from their foreheads. Others pushed their chairs back, and there was absolute attention.

"And we are here, too," the president continued, "because Harry Shurt-

leff loved the club, and because by coming here and behaving just as we have always done, in closest and cheeriest fellowship, we shall be doing just what Harry Shurtleff would have wished that we should do."

Holcombe and Leland exchanged glances and nodded to each other. Leland felt that he had never heard old Manningly speak with more perfect feeling and insight.

"Boys—I can call you so, because I am so much older than most of you—I loved him like a son; you, like a brother. This is no place for formal eulogy on our loss. That has been said in other surroundings. Harry needs no eulogy. Besides, the Vagabond never loses a member in this way. He is still our Harry, still a Vagabondian—but now non-resident." There was a murmur of appreciation at the phrase. "I want you men to sit here tonight, and tell of him, and talk of him, and repeat his stories and his doings just as if he had simply gone over to Boston or New York to live, and as if we were some time to see him again—as, God willing, we shall."

He sat down quickly, trying hard to smile, and a great cheer went up from all round the table, springing out of the feeling of relief from the artificial strain.

Then the stories began, as each man recalled some little event, some quiet joke, some kind act or thoughtful present or helping word in Harry Shurtleff's life. Gradually the tone of gloom died away as they chatted together about him; for each one of them wanted to make his contribution, wanted to add his tribute. It was certainly a remarkable life of a Christian gentleman that was unrolled there that night. The minutes fled by, and still someone would call back a well-remembered story that he had told them, a witty bit of repartee that had made a red-letter night of a jolly past dinner. And as the clock was striking eleven—and they found themselves amazed at the lateness of the hour, so great had been their solemn enjoyment of this unique tribute of affection—

Stanley Armstrong rose and there was a great clapping of hands. For Armstrong was a sculptor, well beloved of the club, who combined with his artistic talent the power of dashing off the most delicate verse, both grave and gay, always short, but full of the choicest phrases.

He took from his inside pocket a sheet of letter-paper and began to read. A hush came over all as he spoke the beautiful lines in the firmest and softest of voices. It was a poem of four stanzas to Harry Shurtleff's memory, and each stanza ended with the line:

"Sit closer, friends."

He finished and sat down. No one spoke a word. A man opposite Armstrong silently leaned over the table and gripped his hand.

Then De Forest rose—no longer flip-pant.

"Mr. President," he said, "I think that Armstrong has spoken the last word to be said. But this club should do one thing more. I move, sir, that the Vagabond Club have the report of these stories of Shurtleff's life and Armstrong's perfect poem put together in some appropriate form, and one copy placed in our library, one copy sent to Harry's sister, and one to Miss Hollister."

The president bowed. "It will not be necessary, I think, to put that to a vote," he said, and he was leaning over toward the secretary, when suddenly Holcombe rose and said in a strained and harsh voice:

"I regret, brethren, that I must oppose that motion in one respect."

Leland looked at him in great surprise, and the others seemed startled as well.

"I must ask," he continued, "that the part of the motion relating to Miss Hollister be stricken out, and that a copy be sent merely to Shurtleff's sister."

There was a confused murmur of protest. Holcombe looked round the table with a half-sad, half-angry start.

"I must ask you, brethren of the Vagabond, to trust me, to rely on the absolute validity of my reasons for

making this request—a request which it is most hard, most unpleasant for me to make—and to believe that I would not make it if I did not feel compelled to do so from the most urgent motive."

"Do you care to say why you make this certainly extraordinary suggestion?" asked Manningly.

"I cannot tell you," Holcombe replied; "but I assure you that it would be needlessly cruel, and I will say improper, to send a copy of this to Miss Hollister."

Manningly remained a moment silently thinking. Then he said:

"Frank Holcombe's suggestion will be accepted if there is no objection. We rely, however, Holcombe, on your pledge that there is some valid reason why the copies should not be sent as first proposed."

Holcombe bowed gravely. "I thank you, Mr. President; I thank all of you fellows."

The episode, however, made an unpleasant impression on them all, and it seemed as if the dinner was to end as unfortunately as it had begun. But Manningly, noticing the look on the men's faces, beckoned to the head waiter, and the loving-cup was brought in and placed in front of him. Raising the cup he spoke the toast.

There were two toasts which were always drunk at the Vagabond Club. One they had drunk at their November dinner. The other they drank that night. And each man, as the cup came round to him, solemnly lifted it high and said before he drank, "To our brothers, living and dead." As the cup was passed into Holcombe's hands, he held it out motionless for a moment, and looking off beyond the man opposite, off beyond the wall of the room, and out far, far into space, he said, with a choking break in his voice: "Good-bye, Harry, old man."

At the end of their walk back together up the Avenue Holcombe, who had been silent for some time, suddenly said to Leland: "Roger, I think you, at least, of Harry's friends, have a

right to know why I acted so strangely tonight. Come up to my rooms for a minute."

Leland followed him upstairs, and threw himself into a chair in front of the fire, while Holcombe unlocked his desk and took out an envelope. Leland recognized it as the one he had seen him open in Shurtleff's room. Holcombe handed the enclosed letter to him, saying, "You'd better read it now. No one else will ever see it. I found that unopened, you remember, on Harry's desk. It arrived, thank God, after he left Philadelphia, and was never forwarded to New York." This was the letter which Leland read:

WASHINGTON, November 14.

When we said good-bye yesterday I did not have the courage to tell you what I must write in this letter. Perhaps now that I am away from you, you will not take it so hard. You will get his, I know, before you leave for New York, for you told me you were going there on Friday; but there will be no use in your coming on to Washington when you receive it, for I have made up my mind and nothing can change it. I have thought it over and over, oh, so hard, so long—you cannot know—and I know now that I can never marry you. I do not love you, in the way that you love me. I thought I could deceive myself, and I did. I have for a little time. I was so proud that you should love me. But I do not, I never have loved you that way. It would be wrong for me to say I do, and so you must see I cannot be your wife. I don't want to be a coward or deceive you in any way, for I think too highly of you; I honor you too much to do so. You will understand everything when I tell you that Lester Framleigh has asked me to

marry him, and I have consented. For I love him. Please, please don't make it any harder than it is for me—and so don't try to see me here.

ETHEL HOLLISTER.

The letter dropped from Leland's hand as he watched the crackling fire in benumbed distress.

"And he never knew," he said at last.

"Thank God, he never knew!" Holcombe repeated.

"And he died happy."

"The happiest man I ever saw."

"You were right, tonight, Holcombe, in what you did," Leland said, when he finally realized the whole situation. "There was no need of our being so cruel to her as she would have been to him. I think the receipt of that record would have been the bitterest thing in her life. I could wish no harder thing for her."

Two months later Leland met Buffum going into the Arnold Club. "Have you heard the news about Ethel Hollister?"

"No," Leland said.

"She's engaged to young Lester Framleigh."

"I am not astonished," he answered, to Buffum's marked surprise.

"Poor Harry!" Buffum exclaimed thoughtfully.

"No, old man, happy Harry—always that, in our remembrance."

And Leland knew that he spoke the truth.



WHY ASK?

"WHAT did you do on your last automobile tour?"
"Swallowed dust and spent money."



NEAR THE CHURCHYARD

MRS. PECK—I am afraid that tree is dying.

PECK—Yes, it already has one foot in the grave.

AN AVERTED CATASTROPHE

By Charlotte Wilson

DICKIE had been telling the Angel about his love-affairs. Nobody would have listened to them but the Angel, for Dickie was very foolish, and he was very young. Not that his foolishness was in any way dependent upon his youth, for he was one of those people who are destined to leave a trail of absurdity, like an iridescent wake, behind them through life. Such people are often gifted, and Dickie was exceptionally so. It was his brilliancy offset by his absurdity, and his absurdity coupled with his extreme youth, which had won for him the affection of the Angel, and though he had made large demands upon it, it had never failed him.

Of course, the love-affairs were legion; but there was one that was the favorite, both with Dickie and the Angel. It had to do with Dickie's high-school career—quite ancient history it was. But as Dickie was now only in his sophomore year at the University, it naturally seemed more remote to him than to the Angel. Of course, the Angel had never seen the girl, but she moved before her imagination, a slim, silvery-souled, ardent-eyed creature, who had loved Dickie in the immemorial schoolgirl way, a way of "Awes, adorations, songs of ruth, hesitations and tears."

There was a strain of the knight in Dickie, and a touch of the poet; and very finely, with the lightest, most delicate touch in the world, would he dwell upon the little unfinished episode to the Angel, building up again for her, bit by bit, out of the common material, a perfect dream-castle of young romance, which surprised her heart into

tenderness with the nameless, pathetic charm of the first of Spring. She liked Dickie because he was capable of feeling so exquisitely toward this fine experience, even though, in the robustious pride of his young manhood, he now repudiated it. Indeed, this was the *raison d'être* of their many discussions of it; for it involved a psychological question which interested Dickie exceedingly. How much had he really loved Marcia? How much did he love her still? And how much, under given adverse conditions, which he explained at great length to the Angel, would the present poor remnant of love persist? Into all these questions Dickie would enter with a shrewd perception of actuality, an inherent cynicism beyond his years and experience, that made the Angel, until she had ceased to marvel at the paradoxes of Dickie's make-up, wonder if this were indeed the same youth who had sat before her a moment ago, while she watched grow up beneath his delicate, reverent fingers a living vision of the glory and the dream. Sometimes she tried to escape before they reached the stage of emotional dissection; but in her normal mood the humorous keenness of one side of Dickie's mind amused her as much as the other charmed. And always his utter absurdity appealed to her; he inspired a certain protecting impulse in her—as if she were an assistant of that Providence which proverbially takes care of children and fools.

This evening Dickie's mother had come in and rescued the Angel just as Dickie's poetic inspiration was beginning to fail; and she had seized the

moment to try to slip away. Both Dickie and his mother, however, had raised the usual protest. She was a familiar presence in the little cultured flat, coming and going as she pleased, oftenest running in for a moment when she was too tired to work, or to endure longer her little solitary room. Mrs. Avondale welcomed her comings and deprecated her goings with a pathetic clinging persistence, because she perceived that the Angel had some influence over Dickie.

Any agency by which Dickie might be visibly affected inspired respect in poor, cheerful Mrs. Avondale's bosom. Besides, she liked the girl; her presence seemed to add an elusive something which was patently lacking to the little flat Mrs. Avondale was striving to make a home for Dickie. The flat was normally as unhomelike as possible; if Mrs. Avondale had few qualifications as a mother, except a capacity for impotent adoration, she had none at all as a housekeeper. Dickie was as noisy and disorderly as a boy of six; little Thatch, the Freshman "roomer" who occupied the court bedroom, followed his example, and Mrs. Avondale herself, in her spotted black skirt and sloppy dressing-jacket, with the gray hair which had given the final charm to her aristocratic profile in the days of her husband, the clergyman, disheveled and neglected, presented a sad instance of a personality unable to create its own environment, and preserve, in fallen fortunes, the spirit of better days. This evening she was particularly anxious; there was more than the usual appeal in the old blue eyes she fixed upon the girl's.

"Do stay, my dear," she urged; "you haven't been over in so long! There's a good girl—Dickie'll play for you—I know you want some music. Dickinson, Margaret hasn't heard you play that piece you like so much now."

"Oh, sure—won't you?" asked Dickie eagerly, over his shoulder. "It's bully—you know it, don't you? Fifth Nocturne—Leybach. Sure! you'll like it. Sit down a while and let me play it for you."

It was the Angel's weak point, and she yielded, shutting her eyes to the weary vision of work piled up in her room, waiting for her. Dickie's long hands were already gliding masterfully over the keys. Music was one of his gifts, and when he played the Angel loved him. He was playing now, beautifully, and she closed her eyes and listened. Mrs. Avondale sat with her hands folded in her lap, drawing a breath of provisional content.

Suddenly there was a light, running step on the stair, and a light knock at the door; then, before anyone could answer, the door opened. A girl stood on the threshold, smiling like a child who expects admission. There was a hint of boldness in her manner, but it was very well masked by a little pouting way she had which was very pretty.

"Oh, I heard you playing that new piece, Dickie, and I just came! I thought you'd let me in!" She gave the "you" a pretty, practised little emphasis which made the Angel look first at her and then at Dickie with a look of not too respectful amusement. It was a pity the child should speak at all—she was so pretty.

"Let you in? Of course I'd let you in," responded Dickie feelingly, looking up into the pretty pink face so near his own, and then, in spite of himself, casting a swift glance of mingled apology and appeal over his shoulder at the Angel.

As for Margaret, she was busy making a rapid, startled estimate of the situation. The girl was very young, and she was very pretty; that much could be disposed of at a glance. The two things that struck her as most significant were the fact that Dickie's look of apology had been clearly for the girl, not for himself, and the apprehension which sat visibly upon Mrs. Avondale's countenance. She was kind to the girl, who was evidently not quite a stranger to her; but it was plain that she was uneasy at her presence. And well the poor lady might be; for she had no weapon against the girl's bright, open flattery of Dickie and

her unbounded tenderness toward Dickie's mother.

When Dickie was taking the Angel home, a little later, he forestalled any questions by beginning at once.

"You see, this Ada," he began characteristically, "is a dear little thing, and not responsible for her people. They've just moved into the flat below us, you know. The father is a rough sort of bloke—a retired pugilist, or something of the sort, I fancy. The mother is audible, but invisible. There's a boy, who performs on the bones—oh, the *bones!*" Dickie bestowed upon the word a ghastly nasal utterance, suggestive of the sepulcher. "He's lovely, like the father—a sort of Bowery Buck, with a red necktie and a polypus." So far Dickie's tone was natural enough. But when he came back to the girl there was a telltale note, hard to define, easy to recognize. "But *she's* a dear little thing; she's miserable at home—as who wouldn't be, with the pugilist and the bones?—and she loves to hear me play—as who wouldn't likewise? So I just tell her to come up whenever she's lonesome. She doesn't know much, but she's a dear little thing. Ma, of course, takes the fidgets whenever she comes, because her people are—well, to put it delicately, not the acme of culture; but her people aren't going to hurt me. I'm not going to take to red neckties or develop a passion for the bones."

Not very long after this Margaret, coming home from classes one wintry afternoon, found a formal note of invitation from Mrs. Avondale, asking her to spend the evening with her and Dickie, as they were going to have "a little company." This was most unusual. She was late getting over, and when she did arrive she found Dickie at the piano playing "rag-time" in his most dashing manner, accompanied by the Bowery Buck on the bones; while the girl sat at Dickie's elbow, her pretty, pink face, with its smooth, childish outline of cheek and chin, and its wondering blue eyes, upturned to Dickie's. She greeted the Angel, as she habitually treated Mrs. Avondale,

with an assumption of long and intimate affection. The assumption would have been intolerable had she possessed less natural sweetness of manner; but the child was not intolerable; she was merely impossible. The Angel could not even find it in her heart to blame very much the perfectly obvious effort she was making to ensnare Dickie's affections; when she looked at the brother with the red tie—and the bones—it seemed no more than the natural exercise, on the part of the pretty child, of the instinct of self-preservation. As for her methods, there, too, nature had served her well; for in her boundless, appealing deference she had hit upon the one sure way to Dickie's heart.

"Dickie's teaching me to play the piano," she told the Angel, beaming up at her. "Get up now, Dickie, and let me play," she pouted; and as Dickie did not get up at once, she gave him a little affectionate shove, as if he were already her property, and then sat smiling up at him from the piano stool. "There! have I got my hands right, Dickie?"

As Dickie took hold of one of the plump little hands she placed the other like it with painstaking care, the red lips pursed like those of an absorbed baby, looking up afterward to say sweetly: "Thanks, Dickie; it ain't near so hard as it was at first." And then to the Angel and Dickie's mother, "Dickie makes a real good teacher, don't he?"

The Angel was not surprised to have Mrs. Avondale draw her tremulously aside in the course of the evening to explain. Dickie and the Bowery Buck were elegantly rendering a rag-time selection, and Ada had resumed her favorite station at Dickie's elbow.

"You see, Dickie had asked them to come up," faltered Dickie's mother breathlessly, "and I just asked you up to help. It's good for Dickie to have you around. It wasn't that I thought you'd enjoy it, my dear; it wasn't that. Such people!" Dickie's mother made a little agitated gesture of dismay. "I don't know how they ever got into this building—I can't think!

I'm sure I never lived in the same block with such people before! Why, in my husband's lifetime I hardly knew there were such people! Why, the father's a gambler—and the lady next door says he takes all the money this boy makes—though I'm sure I don't know how he makes any!—and loses it. And Mrs. Muckleroy says—but no, I'll tell you all about it sometime! And I'm so worried about Dickinson—of course I don't want him mixed up with such people! How do I know they haven't stolen something, or killed somebody, and that Dickie mightn't be called into court or somewhere, to testify, or something! And I want him to go on with his studies and get his Ph., and be a professor! And this girl calls him Dickie, and gets him to give her lessons, as she calls it, and—and—he has to hold her hands to show her how! Oh, my dear, can't you come over tomorrow and let's talk it over? It does me so much good to talk things over with you!" Mrs. Avondale looked up at the Angel with the tremulous distress of an indecisive nature that sees the necessity of a decision looming huge and inevitable across its path.

After it was all over that evening Dickie took the Angel home, as usual. He was portentously thoughtful. The Angel was silent, too, until finally her silence roused Dickie from his reverie.

"She's a dear little thing," he said abruptly. "Think of a girl like that being forced to spend her whole life among such blokes—to wear it away to the accompaniment of the bones!" Then, after a pause, he relapsed into his half-soliloquy. "She'd make a good wife for some man who could appreciate her; somebody who had nerve enough to take her away from it all and give her a chance—snatch her from it as a hot potato from the coals, in the language of St. Paul. And—and be good to her—and teach her things! She's just hankering to learn—and she's a dear little thing, too."

The Angel was prevented the next day from keeping her half-promise to Mrs. Avondale, but the next, just as

she was sitting down to her work, she was startled by the apparition of Mrs. Avondale on the threshold. She knew it must be something unusual that would bring Mrs. Avondale out of the cluttered flat into the light of common day—Margaret had thought that nothing but Sunday morning service would do it. But here was Mrs. Avondale in the door, neatly bonneted and shawled, divided between agitation and the instinct of well-bred calm inspired by the consciousness of her Sabbath bonnet. It was characteristic of Mrs. Avondale that when she appeared in public she looked the widow of the distinguished High Church clergyman; it was only in the cluttered flat, with a background of gas-range and in an atmosphere of canned salmon that she lost that impressive identity.

"My dear," she began, in her breathless, fluttering fashion, "I'm going out to hunt a flat. Now, if you're too busy, I won't ask it of you, but if you're not—you'll go? Oh, my dear, I'm so glad; it's very good of you! And on the way I'll tell you all about it, and why I've decided to engage a new flat today—yes, today." Mrs. Avondale compressed her delicate, bluish lips and fixed her sweet old eyes upon the Angel's with an expression of tragic decisiveness.

"You see, I understand just why Dickie named you the Angel," she confided gratefully, as she paddled along beside her friend. She was fairly tremulous with suppressed agitation.

"You see, it's this way," she began. "Dickinson doesn't know I'm doing this, my dear, and if he did, he would be greatly opposed to it. He says we can't afford to move; and really we can't. Thomas—my son Thomas, you know—has a great many wealthy parishioners, and he is doing well for a young clergyman, exceedingly well, my dear; but of course he has a great many demands upon him, and he has been sending Dickie and me just all he could afford to. And my own income, as you know, my dear, is barely sufficient for Dickie's education. But I want Dickie to go on through the U and

get his Ph.—I want him to get it while I'm living to work for him and piece the ends together. So, as I said, my dear, we can't afford to move; but, my dear, still less can we afford to stay. It has become my duty—my *duty*—to get Dickie away from his present environment at any cost; yes, at any cost." And Mrs. Avondale compressed her lips again and walked on for a few steps in silence, the picture of dignified agitation in a Sunday bonnet.

But at length the need for sympathy and counsel overcame the instinct of reticence. "My dear," she said impressively, "something has happened. It is not much in itself, but its consequences may be momentous—momentous. Let's sit down here a minute, and I'll tell you about it; I'm rather short of breath, my dear, and talking and walking don't go very well together."

They were at the edge of the park, and they sat down upon a bench in the sunshine side by side, the elder woman laying her black-gloved hand upon the girl's knee.

"Last night, after I had gone to my room to get ready for bed, and just as I was saying my prayers, my dear, I heard a terrific noise downstairs. At first I was so startled I couldn't tell what it was; but in a moment I could distinguish the sound of blows and crying as if people downstairs were fighting—*fighting*, my dear!—and some women were trying to separate them. Think of it!—just imagine it, my dear, if you can! In the same house with me, a clergyman's wife, and accustomed all my life to moving among the best people—the very best people, my dear! Well, all this happened in much less time than I can tell it. In just a minute I heard someone running up the stairs, sobbing and crying, and in a minute that girl from downstairs burst in at the door of the sitting-room where Dickie was studying his Greek, and ran up to him, crying, 'Oh, Dickie, Dickie, they're killing each other downstairs! Oh, Dickie, I'm so scared!' And she caught his arm and stood there, sobbing and crying.

"I had thrown on my wrapper, and there she was when I got to the door. 'Dickinson,' I said, 'Dickinson, I do not wish you to interfere—I forbid you to interfere,' but Dickie, without listening to me, had taken the girl over to the sofa, and had put his arm about her, and was trying to comfort her, just as if she were a baby. Her hair was all down, and she had on some sort of a white wrapper, and she is such a foolish, soft little thing, you know," added Mrs. Avondale, as a little strain of maternal apology for Dickie and pity for the girl crossed the strong current of her just indignation. "Well, 'Dickinson, you must not interfere; leave Ada to me,' I said; but Dickie would not pay any attention to me—to me, his mother—but went on comforting the girl, as she sat there wringing her hands and looking up at him with the tears on her face. And so, in spite of me, she went on telling him the story—how her father tried to take her brother's money—you remember the young man who plays the bones, my dear—and how her brother refused it, and how they began to fight. And she said they had a fight every week or two, and that she and her mother were frightened to death all the time—and there she was, telling all that story to Dickinson, and Dickinson listening and telling her not to cry, while she looked up at him and kept saying, 'Oh, Dickie, I can't help it! You don't know what it is, Dickie, to be a poor little helpless girl like me!' And oh, my dear, I just know Dickie will be called upon to testify, or something! Finally I just said, 'Ada, it's quiet downstairs now, and I suspect you'd better go down and see if your poor mother doesn't need you.' Then she jumped up and burst out crying again and said, 'Oh, Mrs. Avondale, you ain't mad at me, are you?' ('Ain't,' my dear!) 'I'm so lonesome, and there ain't nobody that feels sorry for me but Dickie! But I thought maybe you would, because you're his mother!' And then Dickie, who had turned first red and then white when I told the girl to go downstairs, turned on me just as his father did once when I sent

a beggar-woman with a baby away from the back door (she looked as if she had smallpox, my dear), and he said, 'Mother' (you know Dickie never calls me 'mother'), 'mother, if you haven't a spark of Christian feeling, you'd better keep the fact to yourself.' Then he put his arm around that girl's shoulders and took her downstairs himself. But he didn't stay, my dear," added Mrs. Avondale, a gleam of triumphant shrewdness coming into her agitated old eyes. "In spite of the girl, he didn't want to stay. I don't know what he saw. But when he came back he closed the door behind him, and planted himself against it, and 'When girls like that go to the dogs,' he said, 'it's women like you that send 'em there'—Dickie, my dear, Dickie! And he such a boy—and to me, his mother! 'Dickinson' I said, 'Dickinson! what do you mean by saying such a ridiculous thing?' But he turned his back and picked up his Greek book; and would you believe it, my dear, he hasn't spoken a word to me since, except to ask me where I'd put his Latin dictionary. (His bookcase was full, so I'd put it on the top shelf of the pantry, my dear.) But you know that's not like Dickie—he's always talking," and poor Mrs. Avondale concluded her recital by wiping her faded blue eyes inadvertently upon her best embroidered handkerchief.

The quest for a flat was not very successful. Mrs. Avondale had never been able to establish a correspondence between her income and her standard of what was respectable for the widow of an eminent clergyman, accustomed all her life to moving among the best people, and the quest ended dubiously. The Angel, naturally unwilling to take any responsibility in the matter, was yet keenly alive to the poor lady's distress. She was comforting her as best she could when they came in sight of Mrs. Avondale's flat, and Mrs. Avondale suddenly clutched her arm, exclaiming wildly:

"My dear! That is an officer coming down the steps—an officer! Oh, I know he has been to serve a warrant,

or a habeas corpus, or something, upon Dickinson! Oh, my dear, my dear, you must go up with me and see if he has left any message for his poor old mother!"

The blue coat of the policeman was just vanishing around the corner as they went up the steps, Mrs. Avondale trotting swiftly ahead, the Angel following. Margaret caught the sound of the piano, pensive and slow, with the soft pedal on. "He's playing," she said; but Mrs. Avondale did not hear. She opened the door with trembling hands, disclosing Dickie thrumming softly on the piano, humming reverently, "Du bist wie eine Blume." He broke off with a discord as his mother threw herself upon him with a torrent of tears and questions about the officer.

"Well, ma!" Dickie, interrupted in his tender musings, burst out with irrepressible exasperation, "of all the idiotic old women—" and then he broke off, under the clear light of the Angel's eyes, and began playing "rag-time" to the full capacity of the loud pedal.

The next morning, when she knew Dickie would be at his classes, the Angel ran over to Mrs. Avondale's. She had thought best yesterday to leave matters in their unsatisfactory condition; yet she could not bear to desert her friend for long. Mrs. Avondale came pattering to meet her, breathless and beaming.

"My dear, you wouldn't believe what's happened! They've gone—they left in the night without a word to anybody, and this morning there wasn't a sign of them anywhere! I've no doubt that's what the officer came for—to tell them to leave. None of the neighbors saw them, but they're all so relieved! And now I won't have to move, and take that flat that cost so much, with the bathroom so close to the kitchen, too; that was a ridiculous price, my dear—a ridiculous price! And now Dickie will go right on and get his Ph. He's such a dear boy," said the poor old lady, wiping her eyes in a burst of grateful happiness, "and he's so good in his studies,

and the professors all say such encouraging things about him! And to think, my dear, if that girl had stayed in this building another minute—but we won't talk about it, will we? Come right along and have a cup of chocolate—I was making some to have ready when Dickie comes home."

It was one evening the next Autumn that the final note was struck. Dickie was talking about his love-affairs to the Angel.

"What! you haven't seen her? Oh, I say, you must; she's—but, say, I've got a picture of her here somewhere!" He jumped up from his place at the Angel's side and began rummaging with his habitual wild cheerfulness in the hopeless jumble of his desk-drawers. "Oh, she's a little corker—dandy eyes, and ways—my! she's like a little kitten with its claws in. And it's like watching a high dive at Sans Souci to talk to her! I'll have it in just a minute; I had it yesterday. Oh, she lives in the flat below us, you know—didn't I tell you? They've only been there about a month or six weeks, but I've got her picture all right—if I can ever find it. Ma—oh, ma! where'd I put that kodak?" And Dickie plunged into the search again with renewed vigor.

"I wonder," said Mrs. Avondale to the Angel musingly, ("How should I know, Dickie? I haven't had it.) I wonder what ever became of that girl that lived down there last Winter—that Ada girl. She was such a pretty, foolish little thing."

"Here it is!" cried Dickie joyfully, holding up the picture for the Angel to see. As far as his mother's talk was

concerned, Dickie was one of those who having ears hear not. "Can't you see the kitten in her? Now, the curious thing about this matter," continued Dickie, seating himself beside the Angel with the serious air which belonged to the exposition of his love-affairs, "the interesting feature of the situation is that she reminds me of Marcia, and yet she is no more like Marcia than I am like Hercules. Marcia wasn't really a girl—she was a fair creature, you know; while Belinda—that's her name, you know, isn't it cunning? Now, the question that interests me is this: how much of my present sentiment is inspired by the propinquitous charm of Belinda, and how much by the reminiscent charm, so to speak, of Marcia? And if Marcia should appear suddenly upon the scene, what would be my attitude toward Belinda, and the precise nature of my emotions?" And Dickie looked up at the Angel with puckered brow, just as he had been doing at intervals for the past two years.

But the Angel, usually so respectful, laughed outright. She put out her hand quickly, and Dickie felt it just brush his tumbled head. "What a humbug it is, to be sure!" she said. "Come, I can't waste any more time on you tonight—go to the piano and play me something. I must go."

"Sure!" said Dickie, preparing to obey with his usual alacrity. "What shall it be—Fifth Nocturne?" he added, with perfect innocence.

"By all means!" said the Angel.

But her amusement was quite lost upon Dickie; he was already playing the Fifth Nocturne, with great "expression."



DID MA HAVE ONE?

"WHAT is an empire gown, pa?"
 "One that costs a man his kingdom."

THE MAN WHO WAS SHORT

By Alice MacGowan

THE lawn-mower threw up small green fragments with a cheerful clatter. The man who was pushing it stepped strongly, rhythmically, from sun to shade, whistling as he went. His hat was pushed back, his ugly, expressive, freckled face intent upon nothing but his task. Jerome recrossed the thin white hands on his knee and stirred impatiently in his wheel-chair. He was at that stage of convalescence when small misfortunes are tragedies; his instant calamity was that he did not like the attendant they had found for him at the hospital. To be rid of the man's presence, he had sent him indoors with instructions to come back in half-an-hour, and now he was very fain for a little human conversation.

"What time is it?" he asked plaintively, as Donovan with the lawn-mower came near.

The Irishman stopped, pushed the already toppling hat further back, thrust an investigating forefinger into one pocket and then another. His face puckered with anxiety.

"Why, the fact is," he said, looking shyly at the poet in his wheel-chair, "you see, the fact is, I'm a little short on watches just now—fellers is sometimes before they come here. I'll run in and look at the hall clock for you."

Jerome leaned back his head and half-closed his eyes while that golden voice, with its faint touch of brogue, fell like balm upon his rasped sensibilities. "No, no," he objected, "I don't care what time it is—it's welcome to be next year if it likes. I just wanted somebody to talk to."

Donovan looked first at his machine,

then at the uncut grass. The superintendent was a strict disciplinarian; still he might give the sick man five minutes and by hurrying, finish his mowing within reasonable time.

"Would you be wanting me to wheel you up and down the walk, now?" he suggested half-timidly.

"Yes, if you'd as soon push this concern as that mowing-machine," agreed Jerome.

As the Irishman laid his strong, steady hand on the back of the chair and swung it into the graveled sweep, its occupant glanced up suddenly into the face bent toward him and surprised such a look of yearning pity, such tenderness in the humid eyes, as glorified that homely countenance. The sick man warmed himself at that look; he expanded in it, as chilled things do in sunlight.

"You've got the knack," he said, smiling quietly, "and yet I'll wager you've not had any experience with my end of the business—never were sick a day in your life, were you?"

"Sick, is it?" Donovan echoed softly. "Me? I come here about the sickest man that Dr. Abercrombie ever cured. Sure. They fetched me in a dray, or some such; and if I was all in one piece, it was the best you could say for me. I'd been lyin' like dead for three weeks, and my sister goin' on her knees to the doctor to get him to take me in. For you see I was no proper patient for this place. 'Twas whisky ailed me—alcoholic paralysis they called it, and it's next door to purgatory, I'm thinkin'."

Jerome turned his head to study the other man, but the range was too

close. A drunkard—a poor wreck of dissipation? The idea sorted ill with this strong, healthful personality.

"There is your own man now," hesitated Donovan as the hall-door opened. "He's not likin' any of this. He thinks I'm after his job."

Passively Jerome submitted to the exchange of attendants, and in silence allowed himself to be wheeled away down the drive. But Donovan's last words had put an idea in his head, and next morning when he was taken out on the terrace for a breath of fresh air he looked vainly for his friend of yesterday.

"Tell Dr. Abercrombie," he said to his attendant, as the man left, "to please send out that Irish fellow who was mowing the lawn yesterday. I want to speak to him."

In the neurotic's morning mood of chill and depression, Jerome watched the hall-door with what he told himself was ludicrous eagerness. His eye lighted and softened when, sooner than he expected, the portal swung wide and Donovan came out. He was smiling, and his step seemed, as always, timed to unheard music. Without wearisome question or explanation, he dropped into the position assigned him, and, as before, wheeled the ailing poet up and down the terrace.

"We can't talk because I can't see you," said Jerome whimsically, "but if you please, I'd like to have you sing."

Donovan blushed under his freckles like a girl. "Sure," he agreed, "I'll sing you thirty or forty songs without stoppin'—if you live so long. But it's no voice I have, and I'm short on tunes—I don't know any songs except the ones my mother used to sing us to sleep with."

"Sing, please; perhaps they will do as much for me," said Jerome wearily. "I had a white night last night—drew a blank when they were dealing out sleep tickets, I guess."

The mobile face of the man pushing the chair twitched with sympathy. "Well, hark then," he said. In a half-voice, muffled partly by shyness, partly by awe of the superintendent,

yet one whose liquid notes showed the same caressing quality that endeared his spoken word, he began crooning:

"Loud cries the wind out on the black moor,
Acushla, acushla.
But we'll bide at home then, and we'll bar
the door,
Acushla machree.
For birds that fly there is a nest,
For babes there is a mother's breast,
Acushla, acushla, machree."

They hummed like picked violin strings, those half-muted tones; the tune was melodiously monotonous. One could see the young peasant mother, her babe on her breast, bending, rocking beside the glow of the peat fire, in the dusk of her hut. With no demand upon his intellect, the little song spoke to the sick poet of a primitive life, sound, serene, wholesome, based sturdily upon its own content, and all his jangled nerves were smoothed, his too clamant sensibilities hushed. His head sank gently back against the cushions, the chair trundled softly into a quiet, shady side-way. Donovan kept it barely moving, while his voice was never loud and never silent. In five minutes the lengthened breathing of the poet told that he slept. Patiently the chair was held in even motion, unweariedly the murmuring voice sang on, repeating the song.

At the end of ten minutes a door opened with some violence and gave egress to the astonished inquiry, "What in the world are you doing with Mr. Jerome?"

It was the legitimate attendant—and the sick man's nap was spoiled.

"There," said Donovan, "look at the folly of the creature! He might have saved his breath. Had he opened the door and shut his mouth, he would have seen in two minutes that you were asleep."

"Never mind," smiled Jerome; then to the man gaping in the doorway, "You may go back, Hanson. I'm all right. Donovan," in a lower tone, "stop the chair under the trees here and talk to me. You live down at the cottage, don't you?"

The chair was brought to rest in the deepest shade, the rug arranged over

the thin knees with tender dexterity. "Yes," answered Donovan, "all the outside workers lives at the cottage."

"I made up my mind that the black-haired woman I saw hanging out clothes over there yesterday was your wife," Jerome rambled on for the pleasure of hearing the other talk. "You"—glancing humorously at the other's russet thatch—"you wouldn't be the kind of man to have a red-headed wife—now, would you?"

Donovan seated himself on the grass at the sick man's feet; trouble showed itself in his sanguine face. He looked down, plucked a weed and pulled it to pieces. Presently he began in a voice that shook. "No—she's not my wife. You're wrong there. An' I did have one with hair almost red like my own, but she's—she's—"

He broke off and lifted appealing eyes to the face above him. Pity closed his throat when he would have spoken that word to one on whom The Shadow still lay. He returned to the old safe formula. "The fact is," he hesitated, "you see, the fact is I'm short on wives, just now." But Jerome did not fail to note the real grief in his face.

"You'll have to excuse me," he said, bending forward and putting out one thin hand in a deprecating gesture. "I was just trying to make you talk. I'm so miserable myself that I like to have somebody tell me something—anything outside of my own affairs."

The man on the ground took his knees into a sudden embrace. He studied the pale face above him, and evidently gauged the fact that a recital of the sorrows of others might lighten the burden there.

"Talk, is it!" he echoed. "Did you ever see an Irishman that lacked for talk? Now I was born on the old sod, and I came to this country with a boy that was cousin to my cousins, Terry McVeagh. There was the boy to talk to you! Terry had the voice to wile a bird from a bush. And the big, handsome boy he was, too; strong as an ox, yet light on his feet, and with fine white teeth—teeth that could crack a nut. Terry and me run part-

ners for long enough that I knew how he could hearten a man up when he was down."

"Oh, well, you'll do me," put in Jerome lazily, "since Terry isn't to be had."

Donovan smiled. "And 'twas Terry," he went on, "that always got his way and had the best of everything. I mind me a hard Winter when a lot of us was out of work, and the city opened up a wood-yard where any man might go and saw wood for his breakfast. That same was a cup of coffee, a hunk of bread and some bacon. But next door to the wood-yard lived a feller that kept chickens; and one little brown hen was layin', and took the notion on her to come through the fence and lay her egg in the yard there—hens is terrible notionate people, you know, when it comes to layin' eggs. Now a new-laid egg is a treat to a hungry man; but us fellers was all honorable with each other; the one that could coax the hen to him had the egg. After the first morning, though, nobody ever got it if Terry McVeagh was there. Would she go elsewhere to lay it? She would not. 'Twas me that little brown hen would come to to be fed; but when there was eggs to be laid Terry had but to cluck and call her and she'd run to his hand."

"I see you are a philosopher," said Jerome softly. "There are two classes of people in this world—those who feed the chickens and those for whom the eggs are laid. Your cousin, Terry McVeagh, was a fortunate soul."

"Fortunate," echoed Donovan softly. He sat silent a minute, and then resumed: "I'm not agreeing with you there, sir. When times was better I got me a job—and I kept it. That's what Terry with all his strength and his winning ways had trouble to do. I kept my job, and I laid up a little money."

There came a curious drop in Donovan's tone, which had for some time run so smoothly, lifting over the silence like moving water, purposely monotonous and cheerfully unemotional. "Now that black-haired girl at the

cottage," he began abruptly, then paused so long that Jerome murmured a low-toned assent, and looked keenly at the half-averted face.

"Herself is that same Terry McVeagh's sister. They have their good looks alike—and their ways."

He sat brooding until Jerome prompted him, "You were telling me of the money you saved."

"Oh, yes. That same. Well, Terry he was savin' to send for Norah—her that's at the cottage now—and I told you he could keep no job for long. The money came slow. Norah an' me had played together when we was childer. I—I wanted her to come over here if she wished it, an' Terry said she did. She wrote me a letter, too—I've got it yet—an' I put in with the boy that she might come the sooner."

Jerome guessed that practically all the savings were Donovan's, and the quiet voice went on: "I could afford it, an' get ready for her, too. I was doin' well. You know every ward has its big man, and them that can stand in with the boss—them that can make him feel he can depend on 'em—it goes easy for such. 'Twas that way with me. O'Shea was our chief, and a good man barrin' the drink. I had laid up money besides what went for Norah's comin' over and the furnishin' of the little flat up Harlem way where her and me and Terry could be as cozy and comfortable as you please."

With these reminiscences of happier days the mobile face had lighted; but a shadow fell as the pleasant voice took up the story once more with—"Then Terry busts in on me at my work one day fit to cut his throat and swearin' I must come at once—there was a girl and her mother down at Castle Garden, and he knew not what to do with 'em. I could get no sense out of him, but I was a fool to think his crazy talk could mean Norah. I was workin' not far from the Garden then; I grabbed my cap and run every step of the way, thinkin' Terry was at my heels. But when I got there no Terry was to be seen, though he has longer legs than mine. Mary Cavey and her mother

stood out in front of the buildin's like, with a lot of bundles and bags between 'em, lookin' for somebody. Mary was a little, spare, carrot-headed girl that I had gone to school with in County Clare. The old woman bore none too good a name, and her and the girl both set to hollerin' at me had I seen Terry McVeagh."

"Norah?" prompted Jerome.

"She was not there," replied Donovan in a low voice. "I knew that same as soon as I clapped eyes on Mary and herself. I'm lackin' wits sometimes to know a good thing, but sorrow seems to strike right through me. I knew before I was told where had gone the money that was to have brought Norah over. Well, they was two women alone, and from my old home. Norah had no wish to come, they said; she had never meant it. They told me she was to be wedded a week from the time they sailed, and they buzzed about my thick head like wild bees, with, I must find Terry McVeagh for them—I must take 'em to Terry McVeagh's house, quick—quick, and Terry had no place but the little flat. I knew no other to do; I found myself puttin' 'em into the dray with their bundles and their bags, and goin' up past the shop to ask Grady for time off, that I might settle them in the little place I'd fixed up for Norah. Ah, a man never knows when he's buildin' and buyin' who'll make use of the thing he built or bought."

"And Terry?" demanded the poet, leaning forward with unconscious energy.

"'Twas the last we saw of him for many a day," said the Irishman. "'Twas late in May, and I think the boy went down into Jersey with the strawberry pickers. He come home broke—but that's neither here nor there."

"How—how did you get along with it all?" hesitated the man in the wheel chair.

"Well," said the one on the grass slowly, "Mary was sickly, but she was a lovin' little creature. When the old woman seen that Terry wasn't

meanin' to show up an' marry her girl and that I was the man with the pocket-book, anyhow, she—" He halted, and flashed a quick, rueful smile at his companion. "She was a fine cook, and she made me all the things I liked when I was a boy," he finished unexpectedly. "We wasn't so very miserable; and"—he took it with a rush—"and by the time Terry got home the girl and me was married." He stole a half-sheepish look up into the delicate-featured, large-eyed face above him. "There seemed no other way," he explained. "I told you she wasn't strong. Work she could not get. And she and the old woman was always at me, 'Patrick, we can't take our livin' from your hand like this; 'tain't fair, Patrick. Oh, 'tis the noble heart you have, but 'tis hardly decent for you to be supportin' a young woman that's nothin' to you.' And one evenin' I came home and found Mary cryin', and she told me her mother said they was to leave next day unless I really cared enough about her to want to keep her with me for always. A man can't talk sense to a woman that's cryin'. If he's got sense himself, he won't try to talk to her at all. But there—I was short on sense then, and I'm that same yet."

Jerome recognized the red-headed wife whom Donovan had not chosen.

"Things went merry with us after Terry come home," Donovan resumed. "The boy done his best to make it pleasant for all of us, and 'twas happy times wherever he was, them days; though 'tis true Mary got no better of the cough she'd brought over with her, yet she took on flesh and got a fine color, and Terry was always sayin' she was prettier than he'd ever seen her. Father Riley says that half the Irish haven't lungs fit to breathe the air here in America. Maybe 'tis so. I always took such peace as I had with fear. Being hard worked, just then, I was glad to have Terry there to take Mary about and keep her cheerful, for the doctor we soon had to have all the time seemed to think that was what she needed."

The little pause that followed these words was eloquent; the pernicious matrimonial tangle is known in all walks of life. Jerome shook his head, and put in gently, "That wasn't a safe thing to do—for you or for her—was it?"

"'Twas not," rejoined the Irishman simply. "But he was cousin to my own cousin, and Mary was my wife. I'd as soon thought of the Mother of God that she was named after needin' an earthly man like me to watch over her. But what you say is what her mother said when I come home one night and found that her an' Terry had gone together. The old woman come at me ragin' that 'twas my fault, and why did I trust her like that, and any man with self-respect would have done different. She quieted down when she found I was not going to turn her out of the flat. 'Twas then I began to drink," said Donovan slowly and heavily. "'Tis a sorry thing for a man to take to drink in trouble. Maybe them that goes to it for joy may find some; but liquor's a poor comforter. Herself was all for me gettin' a little house out of town. She said it would keep me from the gang I trained with, and I'd leave the drink. But I says to her, 'I will keep the flat just like it is, mother, for if Mary is ever needin' me 'tis here she'll come.'"

Donovan sat long with bowed head. A sparrow on an expedition after string for a nest ventured close to the two men. The wind came softly through the trees and checkered the drooped sandy poll with shine and shadow. Jerome could see the struggle in his throat for speech—for composure.

"And she came back?" the poet ventured softly.

"She come back—poor Mary! She come back to die," said Donovan in a choked voice. "Terry was gone West. He'd spent the money she took." (The Irishman never noticed the words he let slip then.) "There was no place else for her to go—poor girl—and she come home to me to die." Not in any degree a consciously heroic figure, yet to Jerome's thought there was the

essence of the Nazarene's teachings in the quiet voice as it resumed, "I says to her, says I, 'Mary, we'll let the past be like it hadn't been. I've sins of my own to remember.' An' I says to her mother, 'We'll take that house in the country now, and Mary can get well.'"

He raised his head with a start and looked about him, full of the misery of that old story. "The mother was hard to manage," he murmured scarcely above a whisper. "She had a bitter tongue. There was no knowin' what she'd say to Mary when I was not by. 'Donovan, you soft fool,' she rails out at me, 'do you talk about houses in the country for this girl that's got death on her now?—and better she should go too, before she shames us all worse.'"

"I kept from the drink as long as Mary lived—and that was three months. I thought I should die, with the sorrow forever at my heart, and sittin' up nights with her, and the mother always with some speech fit to drive a man crazy. When Mary went the old woman knew it was the end of me. She packed what she could take from the flat and left me. I think I wasn't sober from that day till I woke up in the hospital, and my sister, that's a good girl an' doing well, had come down from up-State because they said that I was dyin'.

"I says to her when she cried and wanted I should take the doctor's medicine and do as he said, 'Ellen,' I says, 'let me die in peace. Mary is gone, I have lost my money and my job; I'm broke, an' if I should see Terry McVeagh that I once loved like a brother, I could do no less than kill him. You let me die now,' I says to her, 'an' 'twill be a good job done.'

"But she would not, the kind soul. An' then come the paralysis I told you of; an' she, thinkin' the doctor at the City Hospital didn't do enough for me, comes here to Dr. Abercrombie that she knew of, an' begged me in."

At the recitation of disaster so much greater than his own, and desolation of heart so utter that it made his mere negative loneliness seem a fairly com-

fortable lot, Jerome hesitated to put condolences into words.

"You're well now," he said finally. "Yesterday I envied the way you could walk across the lawn with that mowing-machine. You step out like a sprinter. What are you going to do with yourself?—I know what I should do with a well man if I had one inside my skin."

The Irishman rose to a kneeling position and gazed into the thoughtful face above his like a child. "Me?" he said. "My sister lives up-State. I wouldn't see the old woman's face for money. If I go back to my boss and the gang, doctor gives me six months to drink myself to death—an' I guess he knows."

"What brought Norah McVeagh to the hospital?" asked Jerome abruptly.

"God can tell," returned Donovan somberly. "She was here when I come. It seems 'twas through her Ellen knew of the place and of what Dr. Abercrombie can do. I guess she's not married yet; they have her name, 'McVeagh,' on the pay-rolls. I have passed the time of day with her, but she said something about my wife an' was she livin' yet, an' I answered her something about Terry an' was he dead yet—'twas sort of like a quarrel, an' we haven't spoke together since." He stared hard at his restlessly busied fingers, which shook a little. "They say the Dutchman that looks after the steam plant is goin' to marry her. Damn a Dutchman, anyhow!"

"I believe I know what the matter is," Jerome began. "I believe I can help you—"

"Not money," objected the Irishman hastily. "You wouldn't offer me money, sir. I could always earn plenty of that same when I was out of here an' would leave drink alone. It ain't money I'm needing."

"No—no," agreed the poet, with a quizzical half-smile; "your soul is out of a job, Donovan. You need a hen to feed. Isn't that it?"

The red showed itself quickly in the downbent countenance. "I'm thinkin' you're right, sir," agreed the other,

without looking up. "But who is there to want—me?"

The last words came out almost in a whisper. Jerome took counsel with himself and made the stroke which had been shaping itself in his mind for some time. "They tell me here at the hospital," he began gently, "that I may never be able to walk again. I wish to travel. I shall need a strong, cheerful, reliable man to be with me—how would I do for your hen?"

The Irishman flashed him a quick look. "Fine, sir, fine!" he agreed heartily—almost too heartily. "I'd never fail anybody that depended on me. You needn't fear the drink will get hold of me if I go with you; an' I hope 'twill be to the end of the world, for my heart is sick of this place."

"Get ready tonight then," said the poet briefly. "I'll make it all right with the doctor. We'll start in the morning. I'm tired now—would you wheel me in? I want to talk to Abercrombie."

What Jerome found to say to Norah McVeagh when he had sent for her from the cottage with the ostensible purpose of getting her to do some special laundry, is not here pertinent. The girl must have pleased him, for they talked long and earnestly, and she left him lying back in his wheel chair, a smile upon his face. That night he grew restless. Donovan had been bidden to pack a trunk, and the poet could fancy him sitting humped upon that box which contained all his earthly possessions, alone in the little dark room at the cottage, bidding a very bitter farewell to something or somebody.

When his meditations came to this point Hanson was called in and the chair wheeled out into the grounds. "Take me down to the cottage," he ordered abruptly. "I'm not sure about those handkerchiefs and I want to see Donovan once more before I sleep."

"The doctor said night air—" hesitated the attendant.

"Night air!" echoed the poet irritably. "Well, I can't hold my breath

till morning; and I'd rather breathe this out here than that in the house. Push me along, please."

The moon was almost full, and Jerome lifted his cap to that friend of poets and lovers as he was trundled beneath the trees to the silent smaller building. Brought up against the window of that room he knew to be the Irishman's, he drew out his watch, consulted it, and instructed his horrified servitor to be back in fifteen minutes. Being away is a necessary antecedent to being back, and the man finally departed with many reluctant glances over his shoulder.

Jerome had barely watched him well off the scene when a light hand fell upon his shoulder and Norah whispered: "Do I go in there now, sir? Sure, I was afraid to try it till you came."

Donovan evidently caught the outline of the girl as she hesitated in the open doorway, for Jerome heard him cry her name in a curious flat voice, and fancied him rising from that trunk upon which he surely must have been sitting.

"I came to tell you good-bye, Patrick," the girl began gently. "I heard you was goin' away with one of the gentlemen up at the hospital. Before we part—forever—Patrick, I want to beg your forgiveness for the sorrows the McVeaghs have brought you. I know you can't help but hate everything that owns the name."

"I forgive you," said Donovan listlessly.

The poet scowled to himself in the dark, and raised the stick he carried to beat against his chair and summon the man. He thought better of it as the girl's rich, shaken voice went on: "Thank God for that, Patrick dear. I'll pray for you every night. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," came Donovan's tones, dry, perfunctory—Jerome would never have recognized them for the tender voice that spoke so cooingly that morning of Norah McVeagh.

The stick came down upon the chair with a sharp rat! tat! "Donovan—come here," called the poet.

Looking strangely white and drawn.

the Irishman stepped out into the moonlight and faced his employer. Behind him in the doorway, Norah shrank against the wall, sobbing, if one might judge from the movement of her shoulders, clinging to the lintel in very despair.

"I didn't know you was here, sir," said Donovan civilly. "Would I be wheelin' you back to the hospital?"

"Not until you have comforted Norah," reproved the poet brusquely. "Look at her. You call yourself a man and let her cry her eyes out like that? Why, I am not more than half a man at present; yet if anyone cared as much for me as that I'd——"

Patrick refused to turn his head.

"Tisn't for me she cares," he said in level, bitter tones. "'Tis a way the McVeaghs have of leadin' you on to expect what will never be given you. If Norah wants anything of me she knows she has but to ask it—she's afraid of what I'd ask in return." He had said all this loudly, like a troop that

keeps the trumpets braying while the ranks are thinning fast. Now he bent close and whispered, with a curious twist of the countenance: "I ain't got the heart to take her on as a hen to feed, if that's what you mean, sir. I can't. I'd be fool enough to be wantin' a return."

"There," put in the girl passionately, from the shadows behind him, "you see, sir, I told you. He hates me—and I don't blame him. But after all, was it my fault that my mother married a McVeagh? I wasn't there to prevent—but I wish I had been—or that I'd never been born. Oh, Patrick—Patrick—Patrick!"

Donovan wheeled, both arms out.

"Do you mean it, Norah?" he breathed, upon the most melodious note of that vibrant, tender voice which was his greatest charm. "Oh, girl, I'm short on words to tell you what's in my heart. But if you mean it—if you really mean that—you'll never find me short on love."



CYTHEREA

By Edward Wilbur Mason

THE pale sun scattered all the air with gold,
 And zoned the earth with daisies; snowdrops white
 Trembled in all the hedges of delight,
 And fleecy clouds through azure heaven rolled.
 The orchards sprang above the grassy mold,
 Their boughs a storm of glory, and the streams
 Ran silvery as the fairy thread of dreams
 That twinkles in the page of romance old.

Yet was the perfect beauty still delayed,
 And wonder tarried in the gates of death
 Unwakened and unborn. Then Summer came,
 And walking noiseless in the dewy glade,
 She kissed the wild rose briar with softest breath,
 And all the world was blinded with white flame!

MY LADY LACHRYMOSE

By Philip Quincy Loring

SHE drove to the doctor's door one morning in a neat brougham. From his window he saw her alight and noted the quiet elegance of her costume and the slim and pretty figure. A closer view, as she entered his office, was distinctly pleasing. While she talked the medical man studied the expression of her eyes, according to his professional custom; there was no mental disturbance in them beyond a very manifest sadness that softened and intensified the attractions of a face already astonishingly disconcerting to a middle-aged bachelor physician. Incidentally, too, he could not but admire their gray depths sparkling with unshed tears. "My Lady Lachrymose" he named her to himself, and the rhythmic alliteration of the title pleased him. But, as he yet looked, she smiled and he beheld the eyes turning gradually from gray into a deep violet, a phenomenon at which he became so absorbed that her voice aroused him with a start.

"What do you think?" she asked earnestly.

"Er — ah — remarkable!" he exclaimed.

She looked rather mystified at his irrelevant observation. "But why remarkable?"

"My dear lady," he explained rather loftily to cover a slight confusion, "naturally there are features in this case that you are unable to comprehend, features so obscure, in fact, even to an alienist, that I must beg you to repeat what you have already told me so that I, myself, may grasp them more thoroughly."

She began again with admirable

patience and immediately, if it may be so expressed, the beauty of her hair assaulted his attention. It was thick and of varying shades of brown with glittering threads of copper all through it. "It is the kind one would never see in curl-papers at the breakfast-table," he reflected, and he might have ruminated further on the subject had not his distraction been rudely dispelled by a word that she uttered and that, somehow, penetrated his consciousness. "Your who?" he asked abruptly.

"My husband," she repeated and looked at him with a somewhat exaggerated dignity of manner.

"Of course," said he hastily. "I beg your pardon—your husband."

"It is religious dementia, I suppose," she continued. "He has overworked."

"Was he formerly a religious man?" asked the doctor.

"Oh, no," she assured him. "In that respect, quite the contrary. He has always been a dear fellow, but he used to be fond of horses and cards, and he always took a cocktail before dinner, and sometimes he played the races for moderate amounts. All that isn't precisely religious, I suppose, is it?" she asked, with her excellent substitute for a flash of sunlight, by which is meant her smile.

"I have never heard such mentioned among the requirements for a confession of faith," said the doctor. "And what is his conduct now?"

"He spends much of his time alone in his room where he prays in a very loud voice and reads the Scriptures."

"H'm-m! But is there anything in

all this to indicate that he has not actually experienced religion?"

She put a very small and impracticable lace handkerchief to her lips before she answered, and the faint and evanescent, yet altogether seductive, odor of violets reached the physician's nostrils and thrilled him.

"That is why I am here," she said at length. "He has been much interested of late in those portions of the Scriptures that relate to sacrifices, and he is constantly quoting from them. I can see that the subject is gradually arousing him to considerable excitement. Sometimes, when he is speaking of these things, he looks at me and at our child in such a peculiar, such an indescribable way that I shudder, and yesterday while he was shaving, the razor in his hand, he actually——"

"Actually what?" demanded the doctor.

"I can't speak of it," she said in a choking voice. "It was terrible, terrible! He attempted no harm, but his act was so significant!" This time she placed the bit of lace vanity to her eyes, and when she removed it she smiled again with all the pluck that was in her. The pathos of this lovely, helpless woman and her child exposed to the whim of a maniac shocked the specialist.

"Is there anything more?" he asked quietly.

"One thing," she replied. "He has another delusion, also. He imagines that he is owed large sums of money and often demands payment from those who owe him nothing whatever."

"Of course," suggested the doctor, "that has occasioned remark?"

"No, because he has always done this by mail, and I think I have succeeded thus far in destroying all his letters. It is nothing and I mention it only because I wish you should know it all."

"You are quite right. I should know it all."

"I am afraid," she said piteously, like a frightened child. "The burden has grown heavier than I can bear. I

am afraid for my baby, for my husband himself, and I have come to you."

Looking into her eyes, that had grown big and imploring, the physician was moved to pity, and he marveled, even then, that they were not red from weeping as most women's would have been. Tears seemed but to enhance their brightness.

Leaning forward, he patted her hand in his blandest professional manner. "And I think you have come to the right place," he said.

"Can you make him well again?" she besought.

"Who can tell?" answered the doctor hopefully. "I trust so, I think so, but I must see him before I can give an opinion."

"May I bring him to you?"

"By all means; today, if you can."

"I would rather," she suggested, "that it might be this afternoon at some time other than your regular office hours, so that he might not have to wait. He is very impatient."

"Very well, then, this afternoon, At five, shall we say?"

She rose from her chair with outstretched hand. "Some day you may understand how you have helped me," she said simply, but the color of her eyes was still deep violet and the inflections of her voice were richly expressive.

Not long after five o'clock, as the specialist waited at the desk of his consulting-room, she was again ushered into his presence. There was an added piquancy to her beauty that came from increased color in her face, indicating that she was nerved to a considerable tension. She seemed very brave, however, though her wonderful smile somehow suggested repressed tears and tragedy. "We are here, you see," she said.

"Good!" answered the doctor heartily. "And we shall not be interrupted. Ask him in, please, and help me, without arousing his suspicions, to seat him in this chair here by the window where the light will shine on his face."

"But," she expostulated with some

agitation, "I'm not going to stay; I couldn't; I should spoil it all in my nervous condition. I might become hysterical; I have no confidence in myself at all."

The doctor pondered a moment. "Very well," he assented. "You may be right. I think you are."

"I will send him in to you," she explained, "and I will wait in my carriage in the fresh air where I shall feel better and shall still be within call if you need me."

She returned to the waiting-room, and presently there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," he called, and at once a man entered.

At first glance the physician was conscious of a measure of disappointment. In appearance the stranger was unlike his anticipations. There was about him an air of mediocrity and of smugness that did not accord with the foundationless picture mentally formed of the man who should be her mate. Yet he seemed decent and affable, and, though the doctor glanced at him sharply, he saw that a superficial examination would never discover the subtle, the obscure symptoms that his specialty has frequently to contend with. The man's eyes looked at him calmly, mildly.

"Sit down," said the doctor.

"Can't stop but a moment, thanks," he replied. "I'm in rather a hurry."

The specialist had a box of particularly fine cigars which he produced. Evidently the man was a smoker and one of some discrimination, for his eyes lighted with pleased recognition as he read the label on the box.

"I won't keep you long," urged the doctor. "Light one of these. I feel like a chat, and a moment's rest won't hurt you. Your business is of rather a rushing nature, I presume," said he, putting this forth as a feeler. "It calls for an expenditure of considerable nerve force, doesn't it? You often find yourself at the last extremity of weariness with no immediate prospect for a chance to rest?"

The man lighted his cigar deliber-

ately and stretched out his legs with an air of luxurious abandonment. "Exactly," he said. "This is a strenuous age and one must get into the game if he hopes to win out."

"Quite so," agreed the doctor. "And then, too, there are many matters apart from one's business that take up any spare time a man might have. There are calls on him from every direction. Even the church throws its burden on the backs of those already too heavily laden."

He watched the man covertly and was rewarded by a quick, responsive interest.

"'Tis true, in a measure," agreed the stranger, "but shouldn't one transpose the conditions as you see them, shouldering first what you are pleased to call the burdens of the church?"

"I take it, then, that you are a churchman?"

"Not precisely in the sense that you mean," he explained. "You have probably never heard of that sect known as The Wilderness Children."

"But I have," said the doctor. "Raymond P. Anson is the leader, is he not, and claims to heal by the laying on of hands? He claims, too, doesn't he, that he is a reincarnated Moses who is to lead the present generation up out of the wilderness?"

The man turned the fire of his cigar upward and looked into it with a faint and curious smile. The physician, too, smiled broadly.

"I'm not smiling at that," the man explained, reading the other's thoughts. "I should not smile at all. It is too grave, too vital, that all the world but this little band, these chosen ones, cannot read the writing on the wall."

The specialist considered that he was beginning to arrive, and in his mind was deciding that there was promise of the development of not a little of interest. "Then," he asked, "you are convinced that this man, Anson, is Moses; that he does heal by the laying on of hands; that he——?"

"I am a living example of that," said the man. "If I could tell you of

my experience; how in my nervous state I was tottering on the verge of madness, and how with his touch, came peace, conviction, an exaltation that few can know——"

Now the doctor began to see it in the fellow's face, his glittering eyes, his clenched fists.

"Sometimes," he continued, "the joy of it is almost too much to bear. I feel that I must seek an expression; that I must make a sacrifice unto the Lord even as Abraham would have offered up Isaac, his son."

Involuntarily the doctor sucked in his breath sharply between his teeth, though he struggled to retain the serenity of his expression.

"You mean," he asked, his voice slightly husky, "that you would—might—under pressure of religious zeal, sacrifice your own son?"

For a moment the two men stared into each other's faces, the physician's heart throbbing heavily in his ears.

"God forbid!" exclaimed the zealot fervently, at length. "Though it is my earnest desire to store up treasures in heaven, the greatest treasure of all, which is my boy, I trust I may keep with me until such time——"

He broke off abruptly and the rapt expression of his face, dissolving, gave place to one of dawning recollection.

"Speaking of treasures," he said, resuming his normal tones, "reminds me of my business. It is pleasant chatting here with you and, if I might continue on some future occasions, I should esteem it a privilege, but now my time is not my own. I will take the cheque, if you please, and go at once."

The doctor was rather unprepared for this second vagary, though he answered the man stolidly.

"Very well," he said, "if you must go. The amount of this cheque was to be——"

"Ten thousand," answered the fellow, with all seriousness.

The medical man was somewhat disconcerted. He felt that he must humor his patient, but to do it with a cheque of the denomination demanded

was not entirely in accord with his intentions.

"You will pardon me," he said, "but I—I am ashamed to admit my stupidity—I have forgotten for the moment what I owe you this money for?"

The fellow looked at the doctor quickly, and an odd light crept into his eyes. His expression was tensely speculating and his face ashen as he rose to his feet and, placing his clenched fists on the desk at which the physician sat, leaned slightly forward.

"Indeed!" he exclaimed, a faint tremor in his voice. "Isn't it a rather remarkable case of aberration, or are you subject——?"

"My dear fellow," explained the doctor hastily, with an expansive if somewhat sickly smile, "my dear fellow, we are all subject, now and then, to these tricks of the memory. Surely, in my professional capacity, I ought to know——"

"It is evident that, in your professional capacity, there is little you do not know," said the man, speaking rapidly, his eyes burning with smoldering fury into the physician's. "I grant you that; you're a past master, but if you think I haven't guessed your little game, if you fancy I am going to let you escape me, you have grossly miscalculated."

The doctor smiled again; it was more difficult than before and the results were no better.

"I am afraid that you are unduly exciting yourself," said he, "for of course I now recall——"

"Of course," the man mocked with blighting irony, but the doctor was nevertheless glad that he was not forced to the test. He pulled his cheque-book from the desk drawer and reached for his pen. When the man had gone it would be a simple matter, by telephoning to the bank, to stop payment on the cheque.

The fellow laughed softly, derisively. "I remarked," he said, "that you grossly miscalculated. Do you think I would take your cheque now?"

"My dear fellow——" expostulated the doctor.

The other man brought one fist down upon the desk with force sufficient to splash the ink in its stand. "Stop it!" he demanded.

"Stop what?" asked the doctor in astonishment.

"Cut out that 'dear fellow' business, though I shall prove dear enough to you before this matter is over—and straighten your face, will you? Your smiles are sunny, but asinine, and they irritate me."

Here was a predicament. The patient was developing one of those unreasoning, unaccountable prejudices, and was not to be propitiated whichever way the specialist adapted himself to his humor. Moreover, he seemed on the verge of the violent stage, and, involuntarily, the doctor glanced nervously about the room. His desk being in a corner, he found himself at bay. Then he remembered his electric call-bell, the button of which was at the side of his desk, but plainly within the other's sight. If he could but engage the fellow's attention a moment he would call his maid and send for the maniac's wife, who would probably be able to quiet him. He began to talk rapidly, fastening his eyes intently on his patient and speaking in tones carefully modulated to soothe.

"It's all right," he assured him. "You and I have come to a misunderstanding in some inexplicable way, but we both mean the square thing and you are going to sit down and again tell me what it's all about."

"Leave that alone!" thundered the excited one.

The doctor's hand, which had crept to the electric button, dropped at his side, cold with nervous apprehension. The demoniacal fury of the man's face was a nightmare as, crouching slightly, he advanced with dreadful deliberation, his fingers crooked like talons, his eyes burning out of the marble pallor of his face.

"You hound!" he exclaimed, "you miserable whelp, if you dare to touch that button, if you make a single attempt to call any of your damned satellites——"

It seemed to flash into his mind that he had uttered an oath, and, though a mild enough one, it staggered him. "The Lord forgive me," he exclaimed in a prayerful voice, "I am strained to the breaking point!"

It was then the doctor decided that the exigencies called on him for prompt action; that the psychical moment had arrived. Rising from his chair, he leaned far across the desk and, with his eyes eagerly directed at the door behind the man, called loudly:

"Grab him, William! Grab him round the neck!"

As the fellow wheeled to meet the imaginary reinforcement, the doctor made a supreme effort, such as he was probably incapable of making under normal conditions. In two leaps he was upon the man, and, throwing him heavily to the floor, sat on his chest, his fingers firmly clutching the other's throat—an unnecessary precaution, since the fellow had struck his head on the floor with such violence that he was momentarily stunned. Suddenly the door opened and the frightened face of the Irish maid was thrust cautiously in.

"Mother of God!" she exclaimed, and instantly disappeared.

"Come back!" shouted the doctor, "come back, you idiot!"

She returned only to throw her apron over her head and again bolted.

"Come back!" he roared.

She appeared yet again.

"Go to my case," he directed, "and get me my hypodermic, then go out to the carriage that you will find waiting at the door and ask this man's wife to step here, but tell her nothing, you understand, or you'll repent it."

He released his clutch at the fellow's throat and rolled back his sleeve preparatory to the use of his hypodermic. In another instant he would have perforated his victim's skin, filling him with a dose sufficient to quiet him for some hours to come. It was then that the conquered one spoke and his tone was so rational that the doctor held his hand in astonishment.

"Listen to me," he implored. "Keep

that girl here. A moment ago you said that we seemed to have come to a misunderstanding. I am beginning to think that perhaps we have."

The physician smiled inwardly at the simple cunning of a madman.

"Just now," continued the man, "you directed your servant to call in my wife. Why did you expect to find her at the door?"

"Because she said that she would wait there."

"When did she say so?"

"A moment ago, after she had left you in my waiting-room."

The humbled one stared at his conqueror, breathing hard.

"In the name of my aunt," he begged, struggling suddenly, "let me up!" And, for some inexplicable reason having no connection with honored relatives' names, the doctor permitted him to rise. He continued to stare at the medical man more or less wildly while he rubbed the bump on his head. "Who and what are you?" he demanded.

"I am termed an alienist," explained the doctor.

"A physician?"

"A specialist on mental disorders."

All at once the man's eyes blazed with an idea. "Did you consider me mad?" he questioned.

"My dear man," tactfully elaborated the doctor, "your wife fancied you were suffering from some nervous trouble due to overwork; but to term you mad—" He smiled at the absurdity.

"But I am mad," he asserted.

The doctor smiled again, holding up his hand protestingly.

"Let your girl go now," suggested the man, and again for some inexplicable reason the physician obeyed.

"Go, Maggie," said he, "and call this gentleman's wife."

"Ah, there I think you are wrong," said the fellow. "At least, she put it the other way about, and she ought to know."

"Of whom are you speaking now?" the doctor asked, at the same time noting the apparent symptom of irrelevancy.

"Of the lady you call my wife. She told me that *you* were her husband, and I say again, she ought to know."

The expert in mental disorders, feeling his brain reel, leaned against a mantel and drew a long breath.

"Who, then, are *you*?" he demanded.

"I am only Higgins," said the man, "head clerk at Van Inwagen's jewelry shop where the lady came today and, having selected our famous Dahib brooch, requested the firm to send me home with her while she showed the bauble to her husband who, when he had given his approval, would give us also his cheque. Aren't you her husband? Think a moment."

The doctor was bewildered. "I? I?" he repeated in astonishment.

"Yes, you. Consider it carefully. A lady's word, you know."

"Great heaven, no!" cried the doctor. "Why, the woman's a crook. Where has she gone? We are losing time! Has she taken it with her?"

"If you mean the Dahib," said Higgins, "she has, and with it my honor. I am ruined. You were right all the time. I am mad, very mad, and getting madder every moment." With which he ran bareheaded from the house, nearly upsetting the maid, whose bovine face was lighted almost into intelligence by the stimulus of her excitement.

"There ain't no wan in front," she announced, to which the doctor replied briefly, if bitterly, that the lady had probably dissolved into tears.



THE CONFESSIONS OF CANDACE

By Catherine Carr

TO MRS. ARTHUR LANE, MARICABOO,
AFRICA, FROM MISS CANDACE HAMP-
TON, CARROLLTON, GEORGIA

FEBRUARY 15th, 190-.

MY DEAR JESSICA:
"Confession," writes a present-day philosopher, "may be well for the soul, but it is often bad for the reputation." But that, of course, cannot apply to any confession made to such a dear old oyster as you.

Though, in my present mood, I'm afraid I should regard neither precaution nor exception. There is really no use in talking; about once in so often a woman simply has to turn out the contents of the corners of her mind and heart, just as she clears out the dark closets and the attic where odds and ends collect, and she usually shows about as much discrimination in the choice of the recipient of the one as when she falls upon the other on a day when she has an evening engagement. In which matter of choice I am proud of my distinction.

So, you long-suffering dear, prepare to be bored by the revelation of those things which, ordinarily, are better left unsaid. It's really too bad of me to impose on you when you have so many claims to your time and sympathy, but when one hasn't the privilege of the confessional or publication, where one can safely go to the last word of candor, one must impose on one's friends.

Now, having made my apology, I shall proceed. Well, then, today, as by token of a perfectly lovely lace handkerchief for which a thousand thanks, you remembered, is my birthday—and

my *twenty-eighth*. And when you're "unattached" and no genius, which is excuse for 'most anything, your twenty-eighth birthday is a date for meditation, if not for tears, let me tell you. Particularly when everyone knows just how old you are. That's the nuisance of living all your life in a small town; you can't get any advantage out of not looking your age—which I don't, if I do say it "as shouldn't."

The funniest thing is how I didn't have a realizing sense of my—twenty-eighthness until last night. Year after year I've been going through the same routine. It's been some time since you left, but you probably recall the details. Guild work, club meetings, calls, where you leave your reputation behind you when you go before the others, an occasional reception or dance in the Winter, and tennis and some garden-parties in the Summer. And the morning and the evening were the second day, and so on, "world without end," I dare say.

I've been going through it now for ten years, without thinking—that's just it, without thinking. It isn't a thinking process—but last night something happened that caused me to sit up and take a whole lot of notice; not of the most pleasant nature, either.

There was the usual Valentine cottillion and—imagine my emotions—I was allowed to sit out more than half the time—*alone*. I've done my duty faithfully by about four sets of youths; now that I reflect upon it, and last night it was forced upon me, by that most convincing of tokens, neglect, that I was the last of "the old guard." As I said, I had not before realized it.

One set has slipped into the other's place without my noticing that the new was more callow than the old, and I find that individuality hasn't mattered so long as *some* one brought me flowers and candy, and paid me compliments and carried me wherever I wanted to go. Which isn't a pretty discovery to make of one's self, I assure you, and one that you won't readily understand, you blessed, single-hearted thing who has buried herself in the wilds of Africa for the love of a missionary husband.

But then you always were "different," and our friendship can be explained only by the attraction of complete contrast. Still, I believe I had ideals myself once—when I was very young. I have dim recollections of dreaming deeds of the most supreme self-sacrifice; of being a Red Cross nurse or a nun, or of giving up my lover to a delicate pale friend. But somehow none of them "struck in," and my interests got absorbed in having what I thought was "a good time."

Well, I suppose I've had it, such as it was—but note the tense. This "better having loved and lost than never having loved at all" may be all right. I don't know, for, singularly enough, I have never loved. I don't know why. I reckon some of them were worth loving. At all events, they have most of them found some woman who would. I dare say it was because I was too busy being popular, and popularity demands numbers rather than seriousness. But, going back to the "loved and lost" proposition, you can take it from me that being a social "has been" is worse than having always been an obscure nobody.

Everyone notices when your day is over and says, "Poor thing!" which is harder to bear than downright slander. And it isn't, of course, that one *wants* any of those boys—nobody would choose to rob the cradle; it's only that they rather want it to be apparent that they could if they *did*, and I admit that I could claim no such indications last night. You can see that this is a sure-enough con-

fession. I'm so nearly indecently honest.

There were some visiting girls, pretty, and young and giggly, and I was really forced to affect an absorbing interest in the stupidest youth in town to save my face at all. And I didn't like it a little bit. I actually felt humiliated clear through. It sounds absurd because it's all very paltry and cheap compared with the big things of life, but when one's life is made up of small things they're vital, and when one has been the centre of even trivialities it hurts to be pushed out to the edge.

Again that dreadful H. B. I can see it attached to my name in the minds of all Carrollton today.

Hence, you can comprehend, in a measure, if you can't sympathize with the tenor of my birthday meditations. "Heart-whole and fancy free," you may believe, for, as I said, I can't, for the life of me, remember one whom I wanted to marry, and, to be brutally frank again, you'd be surprised—that is, I *hope* you'd be surprised—to know how real few downright proposals I've had. Popularity, when you sift it, isn't always conducive to matrimony. Indeed, out of my own experience, popularity may be read as the prelude to oblivion, and I assure you the latter isn't an enviable position.

Also, taking all things into consideration, when one isn't gifted in any way, there just isn't anything *to* do save to get married. And the most rigid examination of present perspective won't give up a "possibility." So there you have it. There, too, is to be found the crux of my birthday resolution. I warn you that you will be shocked, so at this juncture you would better stop and drink a cup of coffee.

Now, supposing you to be sufficiently braced, I unveil the inner sanctuary. I am going *husband-hunting*! It sounds quite dreadful, I'm aware; still, I can't see that it's so unreasonable. We put in a lot of time hunting for a dress or a picture or something of that sort to suit us, so why not for a husband? Certainly he's a heap more important, and I think it's a stupid

relic of Early-Victorianism to think you must sit still and wait for the ideal knight to search you out. It's a busy age and the knight hasn't time for such jaunts—he's much more likely to go fishing these days than a-grailing on his vacations—so it behooves the woman to do a little searching herself.

I know that Arthur fairly pursued you, but your match was so obviously "made in heaven" that no earthly rules can be applied to it. Heaven, however, seems to have neglected to so kindly arrange for me, so I shall have to look out for myself.

I have decided to go West for the quest—the land of men and money. For money he *must* have. Other qualities, of course, are desirable: refinement and education—and straightness, but money is the absolute requirement, since it is evident that I haven't it in me to care for anyone in that absorbing way which can bear poverty for his sake.

Uncle George Hampton lives at Seattle, and Cousin Virginia Dabney's husband is editor of a paper at that fantastic place you read such tales about—Goldfield, Nevada. From those tales it is to be gathered that it is a locale rather lacking in manners and morals, but then, one mustn't expect too much. As for myself, my view is tolerant and I'm going to give these relatives the pleasure of my society this Summer. It is interesting to reflect upon the fits they would have if they knew the real motive of my sudden desire to see them. But it's a mistake to know motives, anyhow. The best of things is on the surface, so why trouble to pry beneath? That sounds so philosophic and cynical—the terms are synonymous to the average mind, I believe—that I am quite proud of it.

As you can imagine, my income won't finance any such tour. Traveling is expensive and one must have some of those garments known as joyous, for it is only in old-fashioned novels that the heroine goes a-conquering with a couple of simple muslins and a "plain black gown." Nowadays, we "gild the gold," not to mention the

prevalence of "painting the lily," and it's mighty lucky for me that Great-aunt Candace left me a legacy of ten thousand dollars. Let me see, did I tell you about it? Well, she did, and goodness knows I deserved it for being afflicted with that old Yankeeified name, Candace. I'm sure your little daughter will some day call her god-mother blessed for preventing you from inflicting it upon her.

So I'm going to invest it in what looks like a sporting chance, and if it fails I shall take up settlement work or something of the kind, but I'm not worrying about failure. "Sufficient unto the day," and the dreams of clothes I've planned will be sure to win the heart of some man. They'll be simply irresistible. The styles are so lovely this year, you know, or rather, you don't know, you poor dear. By the time anything gets to you I dare say it's all out of date, and then instead of clothes I just know you buy books and things for the old natives, so I'm going to send you the most frivolous piece of wearing apparel I can find. You may consider it a waste of money, but I regard it as the safest kind of a bet that you'll enjoy it just the same.

With love, candidly,

CANDACE.

GOLDFIELD, NEVADA, May 17, 1900.

MY DEAR CONFESSOR:

Mea culpa, mea culpa! I am, but I'm not a bit sorry. I really can't be. I'm having the time of my life.

I got here three weeks ago and I've been taking impressions so rapidly that I haven't been able to get things in the least sorted out. It's all great, though the most confusing jumble of contradictory conditions imaginable.

I can't begin to describe it to you, so I'm sending you a copy of Tetlow's which contains an article which, while not doing it justice, will give you some idea of a place where luxury jostles squalor, and modernity rubs against primitiveness. But certainly it is the place of all others for my delicate mission. It's really a wonder to me

that some enterprising matrimonial agency hasn't covered the field before this, for there are just *rafts* of men and money galore. Nothing less than a million is mentioned with respect, and they've surely got the notion that "money was made for spending" well grounded.

Diamonds and automobiles seem the popular stamp of prosperity. I didn't suppose that so many of either could be gathered together at one place. The scent of gasoline is the normal one of the atmosphere, and at an evening function the glare of gems makes the illumination of sixteen-thousand candle-power electrics dim and religious.

Naturally, the social conditions are the most extraordinary possible. There are the wives and families of the men who have been sent out to manage the great companies that are promoting this and that, and they form a coterie of conventional manners, and of this Virginia is a leading spirit, but for the most part your host, many times a millionaire, welcomes you with the distinctly horny hand of recent toil and consumes his viands with the same unstudied vigor as when he ate his lunch of bread and meat out of his dinner-bucket. And *such* viands as they are. That is the only word for them. Things to eat is too commonplace. Canvasback, terrapin, green turtle, soufflé Robespierre, and no end of things *à la*, just like banquet menus, every day—and champagne! My dear, it flows like the fountain of the hobo's desire. And all these things cost, I am told, double their price any other place, but cost isn't a matter of consideration.

Then the clothes they all wear! Solomon in the very height of his glory couldn't hold the feeblest candle-flame to them. The men's garments are Englisher than anything you ever saw off the stage, when they're not so sensationally American that they do things to the public peace, and the women swish imported gowns about as carelessly as if they were mere bargains marked down to \$16.98.

If it wasn't for some natural advan-

tages which I admit, "as shouldn't," I, with the little extravagances allowed by Great-aunt Candace's legacy, should not make any showing at all.

Decoratively, the women are one, but otherwise they are divided into two classes, those who have *savoir-faire* to burn and those who have none and don't worry about it.

The leaders of the first class are some chorus girls who have married All-of-a-Sudden millionaires and their etiquette is the rigidest thing imaginable. Earthquakes couldn't phase it, I verily believe, and it is obviously modeled after "smart set" literature. I'm not going to say all that the literature is responsible for. When we called on one of them—oh, yes, everyone calls on everyone else. There is, as yet, no segregation of sets. You see, pasts are such universal possessions that the pleasant practice of throwing stones is burdened with boomerang qualities, and there are obligations which exact courtesy from the little clique I spoke of, so we are all very charming to each other and everybody is exceedingly scrupulous about her present.

Well, when we called on Mrs. Martin Cassidy, formerly Miss Bessie Beaumont, of The Pretty Puritans, she received us in a drawing-room—it was so grand that no other word can be used—simply packed with rare and gorgeous things that shrieked at each other, and tea was brought in on one of those wheeled tables such as they use in society plays, all loaded with gold and silver paraphernalia, and it was served by four men in livery—one for each of us and one to hand things to them. It was, as I'm sure the marceled and touched-up lady thought, most wonderfully correct and "swell."

Mrs. Cassidy, also, conversed very elegantly upon the superior advantages of Noo' York, and about Wagner and Grieg, with little flyers into literature where she declared a fondness for Maeterlinck and Henry James. It was funny; funnier really than the talk of the frank souls who are not afflicted with etiquette and who don't attempt to conceal how they helped Dan- or

Joe when he was down in his luck by taking in boarders or washing.

Some of the men, of course, are hopelessly impossible, but there are some who have their edges smoothed to a surprising degree. One in particular. He reminds one of the hero of a Western novel and is decidedly good-looking in a hewn-out-of-granite kind of way, with a likable straightforwardness of manner. He's had to fight for himself since he was a little chap—indeed, he doesn't even know who his father and mother were—and he's done very well, considering, though he *will* take his soup audibly and he sits on the edge of the chair like an applicant for a stable job.

These are small defects, of course, when weighed up against a fortune that is growing so fast that he can't keep track of it and a pronounced admiration for your candid friend, but somehow they annoy me like constant pin-pricks. Who is it says "the small sensibilities are more potent factors in life than the large sentiments"? He knew what he was talking about, whoever he was, or more likely it was a woman.

Virginia beams upon the mentioned admiration. She thinks she is "making the match," for I look demure, and naturally haven't breathed a whisper of the motive of my Western visit. Virginia's my cousin and a dear, but as I said, I have the gift of selection in confessions.

I suppose, in the end, it *will* be a match. It would be foolish of me to refuse, I know. His devotion is really worth having—the pedestal sort. These men recognize but two classes for women, saints and—non-saints, and there's certainly nothing lacking in their differentiating powers. He would be very good to me, I can see that, just as it is patent that all he needs is a little encouragement to lay the controlling shares of some half-dozen mines at my feet. I dare say he'll soon get it. "If 'twere done as well done quickly." Maybe he'll get over those annoying solecisms or perhaps I'll get accustomed to them.

One can't have everything, it seems, and one might easily do worse.

When I have any control of those shares you may look out for a good big cheque for that blessed mission that's got your heart, through Arthur. You surely deserve some recompense for your patience of the rôle of Mother Confessor.

The future millionairess salutes you,
CANDACE.

P. S. Am glad you liked the chiffon gown. Nothing could have delighted me more than your account of how you paraded in it for Arthur's benefit, after all the other pious missionaries were in bed. I reckon the style *does* look odd to you, but I assure you that it is the very latest thing.

P. S. S. M. (some more)—I knew all the time that there was something more to tell you, but I couldn't seem to get to it. I've met an old friend of my childhood out here. It's the kind of place where you're sure to run across someone you know, but I was mightily surprised to meet this man.

I wonder if you remember a grandson of Mrs. Allen Rutherford from Kentucky who used to spend his vacations with her until we were about sixteen? Jefferson Buford was his name, and I suppose I saw more of him than you did because the Rutherfords lived next door, and I being so much more of a tomboy was oftener his companion in the tree-climbing and fishing excursions he led.

Well, that's who it is, and the poor fellow is lame. Virginia told me the story of how it happened, and it is very sad. He was a mining engineer and there was an accident down in a mine that he was inspecting and in some way one of his legs was injured so that it drags and he has to use a crutch. They say that he could have gotten out at first, but a boy fell and twisted his ankle and Jeff stayed back to help him and got hurt himself. He was like that, I remember, even as a boy. He's doing illustrations now, virile Western things, and they're beginning to be noticed. I've seen them several times lately in the magazines, signed with a

I and a B all tangled up, but of course I had no idea of its being the boy I used to play with. I am sending you some issues containing his work. I know you'll be interested, too.

He and Burton, Virginia's husband, are great friends and he is at the house often. He remembered me at once and we have had some delightful chats about old times. It is always so nice to meet old friends in a strange place. Somehow you seem to know them much better than you had thought.

Jeff—it's the hardest thing to call him Mr. Buford, though I do manage it when talking to him—sends best remembrances to you and tardy but hearty congratulations to Arthur. He recollects your deserved reputation as a "perfect little lady," you see. Good-bye, again. If I don't stop, the foreign rate of postage on this will bankrupt me.

Faithfully,

CANDACE.

GOLDFIELD, NEV., June 12, 1900.

MY POOR DEAR:

I do hope that you haven't been counting the chickens of that cheque I promised to you—though if you haven't all feminine nature has been missionized out of you, and that'd be a sad thing—for I shall never have the power to distribute any of Mr. Daniel Higgins's millions. Did I mention before that his name was Higgins? Horribly common, isn't it? Nothing but the millions could make it tolerable, and even then I'm inclined to think that it's just as well that things have turned out as they have. I don't believe I ever could have become used to the way he eats. Things like that are worse than actual transgressions because they're everlastingly batting up against you. This sounds like sour grapes, but truly it isn't.

If I had life to live over again I'd get married when I was about nineteen or twenty, if I had the chance. You can get used to things easier when you're young and you haven't so many ideas. It is a mistake to have ideas.

They're almost as troublesome as ideals. You should get married first and acquire your ideas to suit—like cutting your garment according to your cloth, you know.

Virginia says I'm a goose and is rather out of patience about it, but really it was all his fault. That's the trouble with these primitive people. They don't understand the usages of society, and they break out in all sorts of unexpected places.

The trouble was about Jeff, and it was entirely absurd, but then jealousy is a cave-man characteristic and probably one shouldn't blame him so very much. Naturally, there is much for Jeff and me to talk about. Old times and friends, and I should be an unfeeling beast if I didn't sympathize with his disappointment in the career he had planned. He doesn't say much; he's trying to make the best of it, but now and then he'll let something slip that shows how hard he finds it not to be able to do, as he says, a man's work in the world. So, of course, I encourage him all I can in his illustrating. And then we like the same books and music, and when we get to talking I can't notice how time flies, while after Mr. Higgins tells me all his mining adventures there's nothing more to be said unless he tells them over again. It is perfectly impossible to extract conversation on any other subject from him, and though his adventures were entertaining enough at first, quite exciting, they pall as a steady diet.

As you know, I'm not in the least sentimental or romantic, but there really *should* be some little community of interest between people who marry, and I've come to doubt the attraction of opposites. It works out well enough in stories, but in real life I think it is better for people of similar ancestry and habits to marry, don't you?

The wild Westerner had shown sulky symptoms for some little time, but I didn't intend to humor him by snubbing an old friend. Everyone knows when you begin to give in to a man that way you'll have to continue, and things

came to a crisis at a reception the other night.

There is a widow here, sure-enough, but of the relieved variety, with burnt-orange hair and a bloom that heart failure wouldn't pale, and she's been making the openest sort of a set at Jeff. She writes stories, clever enough if one likes the style—superficial, tinkling things, and anyone with half an eye can see that she's only making up to Jeff because he could be of use to her in her work. Though, of course, he doesn't see through her. A man never would, for she has that way of sitting at their feet, in effect, that makes fools of the best of them, so I just made up my mind that she shouldn't hurt him. A crippled leg is bad enough without a broken heart being added to it. Jeff is like that; quiet and sincere, and things go hard with that type. Of course, you understand I was quite convinced that she wasn't in earnest or I shouldn't have interfered, even though she isn't at all the kind to make him happy.

I had put several unobtrusive spokes in the lady's wheel, but Thursday night I could see that I would have to do something decisive. She was wonderfully gotten up in the most long-distance sort of mourning—all jetted chiffon and infinitesimal straps for sleeves. Her shoulders are good enough, but that's no reason for leaving *nothing* to the imagination.

Well, I simply kept Jeff in my pocket all evening. It was the only way of saving him. The widow was furious, quite patently, and The Westerner darked the middle distance like a thunder-cloud, but I didn't care. It was really fun, and then by-and-bye Virginia came and said that it was time to go home in that tone which says, "Just wait until we're alone."

When we were home and alone she said it quite audibly, and told me that Mr. Higgins had gone to San Francisco, and then she made the "goose" observation. Perhaps you'll think so, too, now that I've cheated you out of that promised cheque, but really, Jessica, I couldn't let an old friend be treated

badly without trying to save him. And don't give up hope. There's a lot more millionaires here and I shall try to find one with a little more of the veneer of civilization this time. The Wild Westerner is vastly more interesting in fiction than in reality, I've discovered.

Life's rather disappointing, anyway, no matter how you take it, but one must make the best of it, and money certainly goes a long way in the making.

With love, always your

CANDACE.

GOLDFIELD, NEVADA,
September 19th, 1900.

YOU PRECIOUS SAINT:

I have your dear letter almost by heart, so many times have I read it, and all you say is the best in the world, but I must remind you that you and I are cast in different molds.

You say that "money isn't everything," and I admit the argument while insisting that it is a most mighty lot. Somehow, the things that money is not don't seem to exist for me. I truly wish that they did. I really envy women who are content with an existence which is bounded by home and husband and children, but I could never be satisfied with such a narrow sphere. I want to see and be a part of the big outside world. I want luxuries. I always have, and here, the infection of lavish luxury gets into the blood. Surely, I am better fitted for the place that wealth gives than chorus-girls and former laundresses, and, if the latest portent in the matrimonial horizon be not at fault, even higher station than that given by mere money may be mine.

I told you, I believe, that this was a place of the most extraordinary contrasts, and to find a genuine member of the English nobility among this mushroom society is scarcely what might be expected. Yet it is the Honorable Cecil Algernon Farquhar who is my present admirer.

He is a younger son and the family is, what is elegantly termed here, "on their uppers." The captain, he was

in the army and came the traditional "cropper," was shipped over here because there is, apparently, no place in England for well-born failures. He is quite frank about it all and tells amusing stories of his "bally" luck before he became the partner of the man who discovered one of the first great mines of the desert.

A farther cry from The Westerner could hardly be imagined. He wears a monocle, talks with an accent so thick you could cut it and he has manner that laps over both sides.

He isn't of any great intellectual depth, but he seems a clean, good sort in spite of the "cropper" record, and he's pretty obvious in the intention of his attentions. There's a charm about high birth that draws no matter how democratic you may be—though the Carrolls and the Hamptons are not parvenus, by any means. Of course, I admit that he isn't the type to inspire a great passion, but then great passions have a way of burning themselves out, and I'm sensible enough to see that a steady, moderate flame is to be preferred to ashes. I can and do feel a very sincere regard for him and I shall enjoy the position that his name will give. So I rather think that you are safe in counting on that cheque this time, and, by-and-bye, I may present my goddaughter at Court.

What a queer jumble life is! It seems as if one *should* be satisfied when you get what you want, and yet, somehow—you don't seem sure about it. I suppose it's because I'm twenty-eight. I've come to the conclusion that it is a very annoying age. You're critical and you haven't quite got over expecting—something that you hoped in your youth. Well, time flies and I reckon in a few more years I'll accept things as they come without cavil or question.

Still, do you know, I can't help wishing that I had cared deeply, really some time, even if it had ended unhappily. It would have given one something for remembrance. A sort of memory rose-jar whose fragrance would perfume one's empty moments.

The "loved and lost" arrangement, you know. There seems to be something in it, after all.

Jeff, too, is the obvious object of the romantic ideals of a young girl out from Chicago with her father, who owns no end of railroads and such profitable possessions. Of course, it would be a fine thing for him. With her money Jeff could start that weekly he so much desires, and she's very pretty, too, in a candy-box-cover sort of way, though rather an intentional ingénue, unless I'm mistaken, and it would scarcely seem that so immature a mind could be of companionship to him. Being such an old friend of Jeff's, I am naturally interested in his choice and hope it may be for the best—and anyway, it's hard to tell whether a man cares for mental companionship or not. Certainly, they often marry the very last person you would think suitable. That is, except Arthur. You and he are exceptions to all worldly rules, and you don't know how fortunate you are. I'm afraid I envy you a little. It must be so nice to be contented. I wish the recipe might be passed along.

Lovingly,

CANDACE.

GOLDFIELD, NEVADA,

September 28th, 1900.

YOU DEAREST—OF WOMEN: (About men there are things to be said.)

If I rightly remember the tenor of my most recent letters, you're not going to be a bit surprised by the revelations of this one.

It's certainly the funniest thing what perfect ostriches people of presumably average intelligence can be—poking their heads in the sand and supposing the legs and wings will be ignored. I'm going to tell you right off quick and then tell you how it all came about afterward. That's rather like reading the end of a story first, but women usually do that anyhow, and besides I can't wait. I'm in love with Jeff; ideally, just like people you read about; as you are with Arthur; the "whither thou goest I will go" way. I understand now how Africa can be

paradise enow, and I'm so happy I can scarcely write coherently.

I shall do my best, however, to tell you just how it happened. It's really coming to you after your patient endurance of my foolish babble—not that I can tell how or why I love him. That just is and is the most understandable thing in the world, as you would see if you knew him—some day I hope you will—but how I came to know that no number of millions could gild life without him. Then I won't inflict any more confessions upon you. There won't be any need of them. When a woman is married to the man she loves there's no use in her being introspective or analytical. She's likely to be much too busy looking after and helping him and so glad of it. Really, I think that's the very best part of love—the helping.

Well, I'm not a fool, so I knew some time ago that I shouldn't dislike that little Chicago debutante as I did if I did not care for Jeff very, very much. It was the only explanation. She's really mighty sweet and pretty and I take back what I said about her. But even though I knew that I cared more for him than I had ever supposed I could for anyone I couldn't give up my dreams of wealth. There's a gold-glamour about life here that blinds one, and I was so silly as to think it superior not to give way to sentiment. The most profound ignorance is often the thing we consider our pet wisdom. And then after I found out that I cared for Jeff it wasn't long until I knew that he cared for me. He didn't say anything. He wouldn't, of course, because he's crippled and couldn't offer me the fortunes the others could; but I knew, though he was more formal with me, and I was perfectly miserable underneath. If I hadn't been wildly gay I should have been crying all the time. I had to keep it back somehow. Yet I intended, or thought I did, to marry the Honorable Cecil and go in for a brilliant social career. Thank Providence for the fallibility of intentions.

Well, day before yesterday Virginia

and I were sitting on the side-gallery, reading, when all at once Burton came running up the steps two at a time.

"Get things in the spare room ready," he said. "There's been an accident to Stanley's car and Jeff's hurt. They're bringing him here."

We jumped up and I stood there as if I were frozen. I could not speak or move, and then everything got black and the floor came up and I didn't know anything.

When I came to a knowledge of things Virginia was bathing my head and looking at me with the queerest expression. All of her face but her eyes looked vexed and disapproving.

"Jeff," I said, "I love him."

"So one might conclude," she said, smiling a little as if she didn't really want to. "But don't worry. He isn't so badly hurt, after all. Only some bruises and a slight cut on the head. He's in the library and—"

But I didn't wait for her to say anything more. I got up so quickly that I nearly tipped her over and ran as fast as I could to the library, and I never thought until afterward how mussed up my hair and dress were. One really would like to look well at such a supreme moment if one should stop to think about it, but just then there wasn't any place in my brain for thought of anything or anybody except Jeff.

When I got into the room where he was lying on the couch with his dear head bandaged I didn't wait for him to say a word. I just knelt down beside him and put his arms around me and my own up around his neck. I wasn't a bit modest about it, I'm afraid, but I simply *had* to take the initiative. He never would, and it was funny, but my most distinct emotion was thankfulness that it wasn't Jeff's arms that had been hurt.

Burton and Virginia slipped away, and for a while we didn't speak a word. But it was all said; that is, all that counted. Afterward Jeff tried to expostulate with me about, as he said, my throwing myself away on "a piece of a man," but of course I wouldn't

listen. I told him that his lameness only made me love him more, and it is true. And it isn't that pity that is akin to love. It's the heavenly feeling that he needs you, and when he argued some more I just kissed him, and he couldn't, and—and I reckon that's all. It wasn't in the least an orthodox proposal, for I had to do the most of it, but it's all right and I'm perfectly satisfied.

We are to be married in a few weeks. The clothes I got for my matrimonial campaign will do for a trousseau, for I'm not going to spend any more of my legacy for frivolity. I mean to buy home things with what is left.

We shall have to live very simply and probably scrimp sometimes, but you know how little *that* counts. And to think that I once called home life narrow! When I remember some of the perfectly idiotic things I said I wonder you didn't suspect me of brain-

softening. But perhaps you understood that it was only the tinkle of idle cymbals, just as Burton did. For it was his diplomacy that brought me to my senses. He knew that Jeff wasn't badly hurt and frightened me purposely.

It seems that he had been arguing with Virginia all the time against what he calls "plugging for the millionaires," and he's delighted with the success of his subterfuge. Odd, isn't it, that he should be the sentimental one instead of her? Though she's beginning to look tolerant when she calls me an angelic little fool and she's going to give us a lovely chafing-dish so I can make "rabbits" for Jeff when he works late.

So you see, my dear, there's nothing lacking save your blessing, and I expect that with confidence.

With love—much love—I have it now for the universe,

CANDACE.



FULFILMENT

By Charles L. O'Donnell

WHAT flail shall reap the harvest of the wind,
Who lift the halo from the dying star?
Into what prison-house, whose power shall bind
The blue of sky and ocean, trysting far?

The lawless running perfumes of the wood
That meet in mystic ways invisible,
The changing cadences of river moods—
No wizard's wand may circle these with spell.

Only without the confines of their range,
Waits One who would not seem to lose them long;
Caught up in Him who knows not loss nor change
Are seed and starlight, color, perfume, song.

THE PEDESTAL AND THE FOOTSTOOL

By Pearl Wilkins

AS Yardham crossed the room to speak to her, Madeline Schulyer was conscious of the turning of many heads, of raised eyebrows, of exchanges of smiles among the women and significant shrugs on the part of the men.

The dinner-party was a large one, and most of the guests had known her when she was only "that bashful little stepsister of Jim Crawford's, you know." Now, after eight years' absence she was "bashful" no longer, nor "little," though she had not materially increased in stature and people at the theatres, in the parks or at receptions had come to point out Jim as "a brother of the Madeline Schulyer who designed the figure of that 'Slave Praying or Slave *Something*' which had brought such an astonishingly good price and had called forth so many laudatory articles in the magazines."

Upon a divan, near the window, Erma Crawford, Jim's wife, sat talking to an adorably pretty young girl, a débutante, all dimples and pink cheeks and gold-brown eyelashes and sweet, wide-open eyes, like, Madeline decided, an artist's conception of youth. Madeline had been looking at the girl when Yardham was announced and quite unintentionally had taken note of her expression, so that now when all at once the pretty face grew white and startled she knew, as well as if she had heard, what her sister-in-law was telling the child.

"Haven't you ever heard about it?" Mrs. Crawford was drawling. "It was almost a romance. Madeline was perfectly infatuated with him, poor girl!

You should have seen her then. Such an awkward, gauche, tongue-tied, impossible creature you never could imagine. Of course, he wasn't in love with her. But Yardham, you know, would flirt with his great-grandmother or his housemaid if there was no one else. He flirted with her. He also flirted with a half-dozen others at the same time, and just about broke her heart.

I believe that, more than anything else, *he* was the cause of her going abroad. But it was certainly the best move she could have made. Look at her now! Of course her Uncle Howard's money helped, but really she's done the most with her two hands. You should see the gowns she brought with her. When I took her to Carrie's the other night people clamored to be presented. Billy Gaines said that 'mystery spoke to him subtly out of her eyes,' or some such rot, and Yardham could hardly take his eyes off her face long enough to look at his cards. It would be odd, after all these years——"

Madeline caught the sidewise glance in her direction and writhed under it. Then she looked down at a sapphire ring curiously set in a rim of dull gold, gleaming on the third finger of her left hand, and—remembered.

What was all this? Did it matter what Erma said or her friends thought? What was Yardham himself to Jacques Veremont's promised wife!

"Well!" It was a voice she had once heard in her dreams—a cool, low voice with a significant trick of emphasis that recalled her to her sur-

roundings. She looked up with a start into Yardham's amused eyes.

"A 'siller' sixpence for your thoughts," he remarked lightly. "Your expression tells me they must be worth much more than the traditional penny. Were you wishing yourself back in that dear Paris?"

Madeline bit her lips. "I had hardly gone as far as that."

He laughed understandingly. "Oh, you should not mind them," he said easily, and glancing quickly about the room shrugged with humorous contempt. "But they do represent a very curious case of arrested development, don't they? Same old set of nobodies, *sans* morals, *sans* manners, *sans* grammar, saying the same things over and over. Sophisticated folk, who make a business of leading cotillions, sitting out operas, cheating at bridge and tearing each other to pieces as if life were a matter of dances and arias, of aces and spades, of stocks and scandals. You see, while you've been forging ahead and growing they've stood still. You've been an exile for so long that I suppose you've developed a soul above chiffons. But as they have so few joys, who could wish to deprive them of their chiefest?"

"Not I," began Madeline coldly, when their hostess bore down upon them, smiling and gesticulating.

"Madeline! Guy! I'm so sorry, but really I can't let you two go in to dinner together. You see, Guy, I promised Arnold Wilson the honor. Yes, *the* Arnold Wilson. He's a genius, Madeline. Writes, you know. He knows all about you and your work and he's *dying* to meet you. I'll bring him over. You'll find him very interesting."

Mr. Wilson did prove interesting, so interesting that as Madeline glanced around the table at women overdressed, at men overfed, at pale, bored faces, at red, bloated ones, at faces too beautiful, too complacent, too stupid, too everything but wholesome, she wondered what he was doing there.

Directly across from her sat the girl she had noticed before dinner, and Guy Yardham. His was one of the pale,

bored faces, and as Madeline saw how the girl tried to talk to him, tried to interest him, how the color dappled her pretty cheeks and she got quite confused in the matter of forks, she was conscious of a feeling of helpless anger.

She remembered another dinner nearly ten years ago when *she* had sat next to Yardham. The color had dappled her cheeks, too; her eyelids had drooped and her hands had trembled; under the fascination of his gaze she, too, had not known one fork from another.

The man at her side was speaking to her. "I like your 'Head of Sappho,'" he was saying. "It's one of the best things you've done. You've caught the spirit of the songs that echoed across the *Ægean*. I am quite sure there must have been incipient hollows in Sappho's cheeks, faint shadows under her eyes—her mouth so cold and sweet, yet tense as if with longing—where did you ever find a model with lips like those? Oscar Wilde would have said of them that they were lips that had never been kissed."

"Sappho?" interrupted a glittering lady in a sequined gown and plenty of diamonds. "Surely not the——?"

Yardham, who had apparently not been listening at all, held up a white hand.

"Certainly not, my dear lady," he volunteered suavely. "Sappho, you will find in the back of any good dictionary, was a perfectly respectable young woman who had the misfortune to fall in love with a youth who did not reciprocate. Her despair was so great and I suppose so beautiful a thing that, like many of her estimable sex, in place of choking it back into her heart she told the world and thereby won a place among the immortals instead of a stupid lover."

As his eyes met Madeline's he smiled inscrutably, and she felt hot and then cold. In those days now so long past, before she had found courage to go away, her mirror had often shown her a face that had all the "hollows" and

"shadows," all the wistfulness that Wilson had commended in her "Head of Sappho." Why had she not known that Guy Yardham would have guessed? He was so urbane in his brutality. How like him it was to let her know that he—guessed!

She was so angry with him that later when they were in the drawing-room again listening to Mendelssohn's "Consolation" as rendered by the bejeweled lady, and he strolled over to her, she smiled most graciously. Eight years ago she would have been white-lipped and her eyes would have accused him if her voice had not. But she had come a long way since then. She would let him see how absurd she considered that insinuation of his. He must not think, even for an instant, that she so much as remembered. So she talked gaily and unconcernedly while inwardly she stormed.

How little he had changed! It was the old Yardham beyond all doubt or question. Not a single inflection of his mocking, carefully modulated voice was wanting, not a single mannerism had altered. There was not a line in his face that had not been there eight years ago. As she stealthily raised her eyes to make sure, she encountered his smile—a smile that she remembered—one that mocked, caressed, and mocked again. She felt a familiar thrill through all her sleepy nerves and sharply caught her breath. Did it take only so small a thing as that to create that old fever in her veins?

When he asked if he might call she named the day on which Erma received. She had no desire for a tête-à-tête with him. Safety lay in crowds.

Yet that resolution was only a week old when one cloudy afternoon she looked up from her musings before a bright wood fire which an unusual chill in the early Autumn air had made necessary in the library, to find Wattlesy ushering none other than Yardham into that very room. As, pale and wrathful, she rose out of a deep leather chair, the servant overwhelmed her with apologies, protesting that he had not known she was in the room. He

was a fixture and was privileged, but she determined to speak to Erma about his defection.

It was a very disturbed face she finally turned to Yardham, but he made no comment. He stretched himself with quiet satisfaction in a chair near hers, and stared for a moment down at the fire.

"How comfortable you are here!" he observed. "Reading—" She threw her handkerchief over the book, but not before he had read the title. "As I live, 'The Mill on the Floss'! Why, how old are you, Madeline?"

His light tone disarmed her. She laughed. "Oh, any fine age," she admitted. "I dare say you've not made as good use of the afternoon."

"I suppose not. I've just come from the club where I lost the price of a dozen good books in as many minutes."

"It must be very tiresome work trying to do nothing."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Ah, Madeline," he declared indulgently, "for all your long exile I'm afraid you remain more of a Puritan than a Parisienne. Why should I 'do' anything? In amusing myself I cancel my debt to humanity. There has to be someone, you know, to appreciate good books, good pictures and ingenuous things in marble."

"Oh," she exclaimed impatiently, "you are encased in a perfect armor of selfishness. Is it fair always to be receiving and never giving?"

"My dear girl, don't I give—my time, my attention and my good money?"

She stared at him a moment with somber eyes.

"Why is it," she inquired with feminine inconsequence, "that we have never yet found a subject upon which we could agree?"

Yardham looked amused. "Probably because there isn't any," he suggested. "We touch the incomprehensible, Madeline. May I smoke?"

She nodded, and he lighted a cigarette.

"Do you remember," he reminded her presently, "that night I took you to

the Delta Upsilon dance—how we quarreled?"

"Yes. Billy Gaines and I were talking about that dance only the other day. We confided to each other that that was the occasion upon which we fell in love—for a whole month."

Yardhams' eyes were on a skein of delicate blue smoke floating above the mantelpiece. His face did not change a muscle, but a very faint, dull red crept up under his skin.

"As you knew that Billy was lying and he knew that you were lying, I don't see what joy either of you got out of a false confession like that. Of course I always knew, Madeline, that you loved—me."

She gave a little gasp. "Your assurance—"

"Now, don't take it like that," he urged. "What's the use, Madeline, of putting on that high 'tragedy queen' air? The chap that was I and the girl that was you, aren't they as much relegated to the past as that dead dance? Of course we still have a tender feeling for them; at least I have—and I always wanted you to know that I cared, too."

She could not speak, could say nothing at all, and presently he continued:

"Not that I wanted to care. I fought against it just as you did. You see, I wanted to care for Grace Maartens. Oh, I'll admit that in me you will find all the qualities that go to make up a good cad, but it's something to my credit that I know it. And your chrysalis was such a misleading one. How could I know of the winged thing it enwrapped? But I loved you just the same because you were dimpled and brown-haired and shy, I suppose, and your face was so very white and your mouth so very red. I used to see that sad little mouth of yours in my dreams. I wanted to kiss it, I think, more than I have ever wanted to do anything in my life. But it wouldn't have done—then."

"Stop!" Madeline's face was like plaster. She had the look of a sick child. "How much longer do you expect me to listen to such—such in-

sults? You loved me and you never looked at me, never spoke to me, let me go out of your life without a word? You don't know what love is—you never will know. You couldn't. I wonder if you ever realized how you hurt that poor little girl that was I?"

"Oh, you were quite right. I did love you—to distraction, to agony and to madness!" You were my god. If you had lifted a finger I would have flung myself at your feet. How many times in those days did I drag myself to teas and musicals and receptions where I was snubbed and overheard supercilious whispers concerning that 'impossible little Schulyer girl!' all to see you—only you! And presently you would come and sometimes you spoke to me and sometimes you—forgot. And I would see you bending over women in the boxes of the theatres, driving with them in the parks and looking into their eyes as you danced with them at balls.

"You could have killed my love with one merciful blow. But no! To keep me from forgetting, you would from time to time fling me crumbs—put your name down for a dance, pick up my glove, or ask me what I was reading that I never looked up.

"I used to pray in those days, childishly, that I might hate you. Sometimes I would think I had stopped caring. I would go out and there would be lights and music and happy faces—and I would be very gay—oh, feverishly gay, so that people turned to look at me. And then you would come or someone would speak your name, or I would catch a glimpse of someone that looked like you and there would only be a great glare and terrible women in their silks and jewels and the old ache at my heart.

"And you knew it! Oh, I was only surprised today because you told me with words. You said, 'I know it,' many times in those days with your eyes and with that mocking smile of yours. Others told me, too. Erma and Grace and many more of our set told me with shrugs, pitying smiles, suggestive raising of eyebrows and deli-

cately veiled innuendos. Oh, it was unendurable!

"And then I cut loose. I went away out of the sound of those buzzing tongues, out of the sight of sneering faces, far away from—you. I was like a wounded animal crawling off to be alone in his death-agony. And I went to work. I had to. Work was my salvation. The friends that I picked up were no idlers, but they wondered at me. I never rested. Those never-forgotten taunts and sneers spurred me on. I was Fury incarnate. I set my teeth and said I would show them—they should see!

"And they *have* seen! Oh, I'm not posing as a feminine Michelangelo. You could count my 'pieces' on the fingers of one hand. But you know,

"Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work" must sentence pass
Things done, that took the eye and had the price."

"I have gained something worth a great deal more to me than a few '*magna cum laudes*' from scattering critics. Even Erma admits that I have learned somehow to talk, to shrug in the French manner and to play bridge. People are kind enough to expect something of me. What more could I ask?"

"In other words, the butterfly has not unfurled her wings, but she has shown that she has them?"

"I suppose I did mean just that; though it sounds horribly boastful, I must say Jacques Veremont once told me I could at times be as naively egotistic as poor little forgotten Marie Bashkirtseff."

"Jacques Veremont," repeated Yardham unconcernedly. "Who is he? What is he? Haven't I heard the name before?"

"Most probably. Mr. Veremont is an artist and has had several pictures in the Salon." Madeline hesitated for the fraction of a second and then suddenly sat upright in her chair. "He is coming over next month, and I rather think you will see something of him. He is the man I am going to marry."

There was a curious tightening of

Yardham's lips. He drew out his silver cigarette-case and then replaced it in his pocket with out opening it.

"Somehow, I can't think of your marrying an artist," he said at last, with the least possible emphasis on the final word.

"Why?"

"Oh, for no sensible reason. Merely 'because,' as you women say. What manner of man is he?" But as she opened her lips to reply he laughed. "No, don't tell me. I can guess. A high-browed Burne-Jones sort of a chap to whom a 'woman is a holy thing'; an idealist, a dreamer, yet withal a worker, poor and proud and 'gentle, though not gentle born.'"

"You have seen him," declared Madeline coldly.

"Never. I'm no clairvoyant, but I know—that a pendulum never swings twice in succession in the same direction. Old-fashioned novelists, I'm sure, would have contrasted the lucky gentleman and your servant as 'perfect foils.'"

"But what," exclaimed Madeline impatiently, "have you got to do with it?"

Even in the moment of speaking she understood. He laughed a little as a hot flush burned away the delicate color in her cheeks.

A clock in an adjoining room chimed the hour. The afternoon had waned almost into twilight. He looked at his watch and a diamond he wore on his finger flashed in the creeping dusk.

"I must be going," he said, and rose from his chair. Madeline rose also. The ease with which he had read her had given her a moment of positive fright. She leaned heavily against a big chair, pressing her lips tightly together to subdue her rapid breathing. There was an uneasy silence.

Then she faltered with complete irrelevance:

"I—I am sorry," and with a little gesture of deprecation, held out both hands.

He did not take them. "Sorry for—what?" he asked gently. His face, very white and impassive, stood out

clearly against the portière. He looked at her from under his heavy lids and smiled that old smile—that mocked, caressed and mocked again.

The blood went rioting through her veins and then stood still. In an instant she was quite wan. Abruptly she seemed to lapse back into that tragic young thing he said he had loved. Her heart beat, beat as it had done when her love was very new. It was as if after long sleep she was waking again—to life, to rapture, to despair.

"Madeline—" Her will seemed paralyzed. She saw him come toward her, yet never raised a hand nor said a protesting word. Then, his arms about her, his lips all but touching hers, he gazed into her eyes.

"Kiss me," he whispered.

Her stiff lips moved. "No!"

She tried to fight a deadly lassitude that was overpowering her, tried to push him from her. She shut her eyes, but some force pulled them open and made her give back look for look.

"Kiss me," he said again.

Then something traitorous in her gave way. All at once she felt herself going to pieces. With a little cry she flung both arms about his neck. A moment later, as the curtains fell behind him, sick and shaken, she flung herself face downward upon a divan. She had kissed him.

II

THE next day Jacques Veremont came. His card was unexpectedly handed to her just as she was getting into a habit preparatory to a ride in the park, where she was going for the purpose of gaining a few moments' respite from a sickening feeling of shame and self-loathing which had taken possession of her since that scene in the library.

She went down just as she was in her long dark habit, and found him standing with his back to the deep windows of Erma's little reception-room, the white afternoon light beginning to be tinged with a reddish-gold reflection,

making a refulgent background for his figure.

"Ah!" he said almost immediately, "you are going out. You have promised to ride with someone. I am sorry. I only thought to give you a little surprise."

"And a very pleasant surprise it is, Jacques," she assured him, as she submitted to his kiss. "I did not expect you until next month. As for the ride, I am disappointing no one. I was going out alone."

They sat down and looked at each other.

"Did you have a good crossing?" began Madeline, but her fiancé did not answer. He was gazing at her with a kind of terror in his eyes.

"What is it, Madeline?" he asked abruptly.

Because she particularly wished not to appear conscious she had to blush furiously as a schoolgirl. She pretended astonishment.

"Is it a conundrum?" she inquired gaily.

His expression did not change. "Can't you trust me, Madeline?" he pleaded wistfully.

She looked at him through a mist of tenderness.

"Of course I can, you dear boy!" she cried warmly. "I'd like to see the woman who wouldn't. But really there's nothing to explain. I've been dissipating a good deal since I came home, and probably look it. My sister-in-law, think of it, insists upon regarding me as a celebrity. She has arranged for me a sort of triumphal tour through many mansions! My engagement-book is scribbled full. I could, had I been so inclined, have eaten four dinners last night, in as many different houses! But come—you must know that I'm just dying to hear if it is true that Carl Gaspard has eloped with his model, and if good little Timmy Mul-lany is to carry off the *prix d'atelier*, and how Louise gets on with that girl from Indiana."

And Veremont, certain that something was troubling her, yet equally sure that for some reason she could not

confide in him, told her all the little happenings he knew would interest her.

Once or twice he made her laugh. They talked of the little rooms where they were to live above the rue des Fleurs. She grew quite animated in a discussion over the arrangement of their little *salle à manger*. When at length he rose to go she followed him into the vestibule.

"I am so glad you are here, Jacques," she told him. "It must have been that loneliness in a multitude that was the matter with me. You must come often. I wish you need not visit those relatives of yours in the country. I shall be wanting you every day." Then before he had time to question, she held out her hand.

"Good-bye, or rather, au revoir," she said gently.

She was quite cheerful as she went up to her room; now that Jacques was here all would be well again. She was always calm, always tranquil, always self-possessed with him. That episode of yesterday afternoon which had cost her such agonies of shame and wild bursts of anger, now against Yardham, now against herself, she passed over airily as a last flare-up of a dying blaze. She would not think of it any more. It was the revisiting of old scenes, the recalling of old emotions, the meeting with old acquaintances that had done the mischief.

Even this little room which had been hers so long ago and which she had begged Erma to allot her in place of the "guest-of-honor apartments," fitted up for her, still held its suggestions of bitter-sweet reveries, of dreams too impossible to come true, of long nights by the window listening to the sound of wheels and footsteps forever echoing in the quiet streets below.

It was like the girl she had been in those days—this little sanctuary, so white, so quaint, so sweet with its many little vases filled with flowers, its plaster casts of Apollo and Theseus, its pictures of Launcelot and Elaine, of Paris and C  none, its low book-case filled with white and silver "gift-

books," its window-box of mignonette. Madeline laughed through tears as she looked around it. Dear, dear little room—but how it cried out a sad little secret!

She sat down in a low rocker near the window. Quite unaccountably she fell to thinking of Yardham. His white impassive face stared out at her from the corners of the room. His voice, of all human voices the one she most feared and yet at the same time most thirsted to hear, mocked glibly above the ticking of her little porcelain clock. Once more she grew sick with shame as she remembered how cool his lips had been when she had kissed him. Ah, why had she done that? She had thought herself so strong and here she was so weak. She—

A little breeze came frolicking through the open windows, blowing about the muslin curtains, scattering papers and rustling the leaves of books. Something on her dresser fell to the floor. She ran to pick it up. It was a framed photograph of Jacques Veremont.

She looked long into the steadfast eyes, at the tender mouth.

"Oh, you must save me!" she cried. "You must save me!"

For the next few weeks she saw Jacques every day. In addition to this she threw herself into a veritable whirlwind of "affairs." Teas, dinners, musicals, receptions, the theatre—she missed nothing. She danced, she drove, she motored, she shopped. People remarked her high spirits. Yardham she contrived to avoid. But, as the days wore on, she was a little puzzled to find that it was not necessary to contrive to avoid him. He seemed to have forgotten about that conversation in the library. Never by word or look or action did he refer to it. Quiet friendliness, nothing more, was in his manner, his speech, his attentions toward her.

Madeline began to breathe more freely. Yet for all that there was a little frozen spot in her heart. Sometimes when she was alone in her little

white room she found herself indulging in unexplainable fits of tears.

When, one morning—it happened to be the very morning that Jacques Veremont had left for the country—Erma came in with the news that she was going to accept invitations for Altah Shelstone's ball, Madeline made no objections. Mrs. Shelstone was Yardham's sister and, of course, he would be at the ball and might probably dance with her once, Madeline assured herself, with a curious little pang.

The Shelstones' place was about twenty miles out of town and had just been completed so that the occasion was to be a sort of house-warming. Madeline was quite curious to see the house, for she had heard much concerning it. It was called "Shelstone Towers," was almost a castle and had been five years in the process of construction—long enough, as Yardham was fond of remarking, for it to become in a slight degree mellowed before its owners took up their abode therein.

But on the night of the ball as, escorted by her stepbrother and his wife, Madeline entered the reception-rooms, she felt that wagging tongues had not said half enough. She had expected something beautiful—but this! She grew a little dizzy as she glanced about the brilliantly lighted suites and noticed the banks and banks of flowers, the women in their elaborate toilettes, the men urbanely at ease in their evening clothes, the objects priceless and rare that met the eye at every turn—pictures of which she had seen only reproductions, chairs which had stood in a queen's boudoir, a mantel of Italian marble almost criminally costly, ceilings where golden-haired nymphs spied down through bowers of roses on the throngs beneath.

She herself was in harmony with these surroundings. As she went to pay her respects to the hostess a little hum went over the room. She was in white lace, white flowers were in her hair and pearls circled her throat. To shine and not to dazzle had now for a long time been her aim, and she was perfectly aware that her natural dis-

tingtion was accentuated by a simplicity that was as skilled and costly as it was apparently without guile.

When she entered the ball-room she was surrounded almost immediately and had hardly a dance left when Yardham sauntered over, cool and imperturbable as ever, even in his colorless evening clothes, having an air of polished superiority, of ironical politeness, that though a trifle unflattering was none the less effective.

He looked over her card, scratched something upon it and handed it back with the remark that he had crossed out the names of two "college cubs" whose dances came together, and substituted his own. He added that as the men were freshmen they would probably not come for her, anyway.

She did not see him again until, consulting her card, she found the two mutilated names, and looking up discovered him at her elbow.

"I saw one of your cubs looking for you a moment ago," he informed her pleasantly. "He impressed me as of the genus that steps on trains and backs into chairs. You look fagged. Don't you want to come away somewhere with me and rest a while?"

Madeline rose. "I should like it above all things, she confessed. "Let's go into the conservatory."

"He'll search the conservatory the first thing," objected Yardham. "Come, I know of a place where we will not be disturbed."

His hand at her elbow, he skilfully manoeuvred her out of the crush and they left behind them the blaze of lights, the revolving couples, the music, the laughter and gay talk, the hothouse atmosphere, and went out upon the moonlit terrace and across it to a little ivy-covered tower, fantastic, architecturally impossible, but in the etherealizing moonlight a thing snatched from an enchanted garden. At the foot of the little spiral stairway Yardham motioned for her to ascend, and as she hesitated he laughed.

"You're not a débutante, you know, Madeline," he told her, and with a little half-angry shrug she gathered up her

draperies and preceded him up the stairs.

They came out into a veritable little Summer arbor, as it were, above the trees. It was open upon all sides, but a solid-looking balustrade ran all around it, and about the columns that supported the pagoda-like roof, ivy, just touched with the scarlet and gold of early Autumn, twined as thick and as lovingly as if it had been growing for a century instead of less than half a decade.

As the two stepped into the little retreat Madeline gave an impulsive cry of delight. She walked directly to the balustrade and stood leaning over it and looking down at the scene below, the dewy lawns sloping away from the house, the wooded park, shadowy, mysterious, full of dim paths, the little artificial lake, like a sheet of luminous silver in the moonlight, mirroring the stars. The trees were very still; from the dreaming gardens arose sweet, faint odors. The charm of an Indian Summer night pervaded everything.

Through the open windows of the ball-room below there floated up to them the enticing strains of a waltz, something slow, cloyingly sweet, yet with an undercurrent of sadness in it like the good-byes of lovers who have known "love's sad satiety."

Yardham and Madeline stood in silence. She was breathing quickly. In the brilliant night light she looked pale and a little tired; her head seemed drooping under the weight of her hair.

"How beautiful it is!" she breathed at last; "how beautiful!"

"Yes," assented Yardham carelessly. "It's little short of satisfying, isn't it?"

He stared thoughtfully down at the little lake jeweled with the reflection of stars.

"Shelstone and Altah intend going abroad in a couple of months," he said after a moment. "They will be gone a year, at least. It seems a pity, doesn't it, to shut the place up even for a year?" His eyes were still upon the little lake. "Suppose," he suggested, neither raising nor lowering the pitch of his voice, "suppose we lease it for a year."

Madeline clutched dizzily at a pillar. "Suppose we lease it!" she gasped in astonishment. "Are you moon-struck?" She steadied herself against the friendly pillar and tried to laugh. "How absurd!" she exclaimed, with an assumed air of relief. "For a moment I really thought you meant it."

He turned and looked at her; in the moonlight his eyes had the cold glitter of steel.

"Well, then," he stated coolly, "in that moment you were entirely right. I meant just what I said. The place suits me. I think we could be almost happy here. Did you take notice of the drawing-room? It is my idea of what a drawing-room should be. I think you will like the library even better. Shelstone fetched it, in the approved American fashion, almost intact from a castle overseas. It is one of those big, somber, barn-like apartments with mullioned windows, panels of dull wood, tapestries so old that they hardly hold together and shelves and shelves of books that have never been opened. There is a lot of clumsy antique furniture to clutter it up, and some bronzes that would interest you and several suits of armor. And there is a real fireplace—a big one.

"Of Winter nights when the mist hangs over the lake and the ivy taps wraith-like at the windows and the storm-god howls, we will draw the curtains, and the big chair in front of the fire will hold the two of us. In the windy Spring days we will tramp through the park and watch for the new leaves and the first birds to come back. And when Summer comes again with its sweet do-nothing nights of moonlight and starlight we will come here just as we have tonight, and you will look down on the park and the little lake and say again, 'How beautiful!' and I——"

"Are you quite mad, Guy?" Madeline was trembling violently. Her hands were at her throat as if she were choking.

A white shawl lay in a near-by chair and he took it up. "You are cold,"

he said, and wrapped it solicitously about her. The music in the ball-room suddenly ceased, leaving in the air a numbing silence in which could be heard the sound of voices and laughter and the pacing of feet as the dancers promenaded, mingled with the rippling of the little lake and the chirping of crickets in the park. Then the same haunting air began again, slow, cloyingly sweet, yet with an undercurrent of sadness in it, like the good-byes of lovers who have known "love's sad satiety."

"Am I mad?" asked Yardham, speaking at last. "Perhaps so. Most of us, I believe, are more or less mad. And it is surely madness for us, all antagonistic and clashing as we are, to love each other. But we don't seem to have been consulted in the matter, to have had any choice. I didn't want to love you. You prayed that you might hate me. But we know now that our fight was useless. I'm a worldling of the world, but I have to admit that. Ah, I have looked many times into many eyes and thought for a month or a week or a night, perhaps, that I would never care to look into any others. I have gone further than looking into eyes. But I have come back to you!"

"For heaven's sake, hush! You have no right to tell me these things. I have no right to listen. You are forgetting Jacques."

"Oh, no, I am not forgetting him. I am sorry for him. I saw him driving in the park with you the other day. I knew him instantly. I suppose he loves you!"

"I am sure of it."

"Well, that makes it hard, of course, but it doesn't alter the sequel. You can't marry him, you know."

She gathered up her long gown. "I will not listen to any more of—of this! I am going down."

He laid his arm lightly across her shoulders. "Oh, no, you're not going down," he assured her evenly. "You're going to stay till I've made you see." Then suddenly and angrily he drew away his arm. "For God's sake!" he exclaimed irritably, "up here above

the 'roofs of men' with the night and the stars, let's dare be frank—let's face things."

"Very well, we *will* face them," she retorted passionately. "But first of all, let's face the fact that if we should be so lost to reason, to do the thing you propose—to marry—we could never be happy together. You asked me to be frank. Guy, I do not know whether I love you the more or hate you. I love you because I cannot help it, but I hate you for a thousand reasons. And you—oh, Guy, is there not mingled with your love for me a sort of gentle contempt for me, too? I have read it a thousand times in your eyes. It is one of the thousand reasons I have for hating you."

As she paused abruptly, he looked up. "And isn't it one of your reasons for caring for me as well?" he asked quietly. "Don't think for one instant, Madeline, that I have any illusions about myself. If you did not love me, perhaps I would ask your forgiveness for being I. Did you think it would be news to me to hear that we could never be happy together? Oh, no doubt, we shall quarrel frightfully and you will be jealous and I will insult your friends and you will call me a cad, and I will speak slightly of work and we shall eternally play at cross-purposes. But there will be compensating joys, dear girl, golden hours of rapture for all our leaden months of despair. And who shall say the exchange is not a fair one?"

Madeline held up the hand on which the sapphire ring sparkled in the moonlight.

"I am Jacques Veremont's promised wife," she said in a stifled tone.

"It would make no difference if you were his *wife*. You would be mine all the same. What do a ring and a few spoken words amount to, or for that matter, a parson and a marriage-service and many witnesses? Before the laws there was the Law. I am not taking you away from this Jacques Veremont. You have never been his."

"No," said Madeline bitterly, "for he

has never given me a moment of pain. Because of him I have passed no sleepless nights, lived through no days of anguish, shed no tears, endured no heartaches. But he is very dear to me, and—'good' beyond mine old belief in mankind. Him I can understand. We have the same tastes, my friends will be his friends. He has his work; I have mine."

"Your work! And what is any woman's work, any woman's career, but something with which she chooses to divert herself until the real business of her life occurs—the subjecting of the man? That is the matter with you women—none of you work for the love of work—you must always have an eye to the man you want to fascinate, to humble, to forget. For instance, why did you, little sybaritic, indolence-loving kitten that you once were, take up rough tools in your soft hands, what possessed you of that insatiable fury for work, that rage to succeed? Was it because of your 'friends,' those people who made innuendos and snubbed you and called you superciliously that 'little insignificant Schulyer girl'? They helped, I suppose. But paradoxical as it may seem, has it not been I who have been your good angel in disguise? I who hurt you, and made you endure sleepless nights and gave point to all their innuendos. Why, you have me to thank for your going to work at all. A sense of gratitude, if nothing else, should make you turn to me."

Madeline's hand went to her throat; abruptly her calm deserted her.

"Oh, you read me like an open book!" she cried, "and you drag out of me and hold up mockingly before me things I have never admitted even to my innermost consciousness. You know me better than I know myself. You play upon my weaknesses as a practiced hand plays upon the strings of a violin, but you can't give me the courage to sacrifice my peace of mind, my work, my dreams of fame, my self-respect even for a love that is three parts agony to one part joy."

She lay back against the unresponsive pillar as if crucified to the cold stone.

Down in the ball-room they were playing a two-step, a rollicking tune that stirred the blood, gay, bacchantic.

"My God, Madeline!" exclaimed Yardham, "how dare you marry any other man than me? Even if your love for me was dead you could never love another man as you have loved me. But your love for me is not dead, and you know it. You see, I am perfectly frank. I talk to you as I talk to my other self. You *are* my other self. I am yours."

She opened her white lips, but no sound came from them. Her eyes were bright as tears. A restless movement caused her white shawl to fall to the floor, and as he caught it up and wrapped it once more about her it seemed the natural thing for his arms to stay around her and his lips to brush her cheek.

"Come, let's not quarrel any more," he said, as if talking to a spoiled child. "Let's yield graciously, as we have to yield, anyway. Two weeks from tonight I'm off for London. I shall buy two tickets. Are you listening, Madeline? At ten—Wednesday night—the twenty-second, I shall come for you. We can motor out to Lenox, be married there and from there take the one-thirty train to New York and have ample time, I think, to catch our steamer. Is there anything you want to ask about?"

"Oh, I can't! You know I can't go with you!" she half-whispered.

"Look at me!" he said very low; but she could not for the mist in her eyes, and after a moment he bent over and deliberately kissed her upon the lips.

A long series of struggles had worn and broken her so that now she seemed to have no strength left, and perhaps because she was very tired it seemed well enough just to lean her head in the hollow of his shoulder and to rest unresistingly in his arms.

"Remember, Wednesday night—the twenty-second—at ten. I shall make all arrangements for your accompanying me, and you will be ready, won't you?"

She wondered why his voice sounded so dream-like.

Very gently, then, he released her. He picked up her fan which had dropped upon the floor.

"Perhaps we had better go down now, dear," he suggested. "Someone may be looking for you."

III

THE days that followed always seemed to Madeline like a succession of hideous dreams. Jacques did not write; he had not given her his address, she could not communicate with him. As he had not said how long he would be gone she had supposed it would be for only a few days, but as a week passed with no word from him a chill fear stirred in her heart. She was certain if she could but look into his steadfast eyes, hear his quiet voice, she could overcome this almost resistless madness that was sweeping her into Yardham's arms. His presence would be as a quieting hand passed over an aching forehead; the old fever waxing strong in her veins again would go down. She would be able to see clearly once more. But to increase her terror she found that when she thought of him it was with an effort. Suddenly and quite without reason he seemed relegated to the "dim distance—half a life away" almost. She forgot how he looked. It was as if she were trying to recall the face of someone she had known long ago in her earliest childhood. When she thought of those little rooms above the rue des Fleurs, with Jacques's old Mathilde stamping about the tiny kitchen singing *chansons*, slamming and opening doors and letting into their little salon odors of *le poulet*, *les choux* and *les oignons* she made an involuntary grimace, though she hated herself for it.

If only Jacques would come! Her need of him was so great that he must feel it through miles of space. Yet one day followed another and brought no word from him. And when Yardham met her on the street or passed

her in the park or bowed to her across a sea of faces in an after-theatre crush, he smiled the smile that mocked, carressed and mocked again, the smile that said, "You are one of my possessions," as plainly as if he had spoken the words.

It was not until the very last day—Wednesday, the twenty-second, that she thought of going to Jacques's hotel and asking if he had left his address there. Nothing but real extremity would have driven her to it, but by now she was desperate. She discovered that he *had* left his address, was only a six hours' ride away, and could easily be reached by telephone. After searching a while she found his number and went to call him up.

But they were a long time making "connections," and it seemed to her that she stood for hours in the stuffy little telephone booth, and had spelled the name over at least a dozen times before she got the house at which he was staying. She asked for "Mr. Veremont," gave her own name to the person at the other end of the wire and waited another interminable ten minutes. At last she heard the click of a lifted receiver and then his voice far away and unfamiliar as his face had been when she had tried to recall how he had looked and could not. He asked the same question he had asked that afternoon she had come down to find him in Erma's little reception-room: "What is it, Madeline?" His voice had the same wistfulness, the same alarm.

She did not stop to choose her words. "I want you to get back to town as quickly as possible," she breathed into the insensate mouthpiece. "Leave on the very next train. . . . No, tomorrow won't do. I must see you before ten o'clock this evening. . . . Do you hear, Jacques? . . . Before *ten*, I *must* see you. . . . Yes, I am in trouble. . . . No, not now. Come without fail. . . . Thank you. Good-bye!"

Once in her carriage again she paused to take breath. Well, it was all over now! For all Yardham's smile of possession she was not to be his. As she

drove back to Erma's she recognized his car drawn up to the curb before his club, and as she craned her neck to make sure that she had not been mistaken, Yardham himself came leisurely down the steps. A second car with some women in it shot past and she saw him raise his hat, then the car abruptly stopped and they were beckoning to him; when she raised the flap at the back of the carriage and looked again he had signaled to his chauffeur to go on without him and the lady in the rear seat was making a place for him at her side.

Madeline sharply caught her breath. Perhaps he was even now smiling into other eyes the smile she had thought was for her alone. She drove home with a dead weight at her heart. After luncheon she pleaded a headache as an excuse for shutting herself in her room for the remainder of the afternoon, and certainly there was an almost unendurable throbbing in the region of her temples, and a lump in her throat that would not go down, hurt and hurt; and many times the tears she would not let fall smarted stingingly under her eyelids.

All the laboriously-acquired sophistries with which she had deluded herself for so long suddenly fell away from her. Once more she became as that tragic young girl upon whose heart the sad burden of its love had pressed so heavily. She could see nothing but Yardham's face. And she had given him up, was never to see him again!

Early in the afternoon the sky had become overcast, and at five o'clock it was raining, not violently, but gently, lugubriously, without a trace of wind, beading the window-panes, forming sad little pools at crossings in grass-plots among heaps of yellow leaves under the trees.

Jim and Erma came home long enough to look in upon "the invalid," as they called her, advised bed and headache drops, and then, after hasty and unsatisfactory toilettes, took themselves off, the one cursing, the other bewailing the practice of dining out.

Madeline wanted no dinner. She dressed and then went into Erma's sit-

ting-room for a book to keep her from thinking during the time that must elapse before Jacques's arrival. She found one and then returning to her own room tried to concentrate her attention upon it. But the words stared up at her like meaningless hieroglyphics and her hands trembled so that many times she almost let the little volume fall. The beating of her heart kept time to the ticking of the clock.

When the half-hour struck she grew cold with nervous excitement. Jacques would be coming soon now! Coming—and what did she want of him, what did she have to say to him? As she pressed her trembling hands to her feverish temples the loud pealing of the door-bell made her start. Panic-stricken for a moment, she stared wildly about her like one pursued, and then, controlling her quivering nerves by a supreme effort of the will, she sank back into her chair and picked up her book.

A maid toiled up the stairs, knocked and came in with a little tray upon which lay a card.

Madeline did not look at it. "Tell him I have gone out," she said curtly, but as the girl turned to go she called her back. "No, wait. I have changed my mind. I will go down. He is in the library?"

Her dragging footsteps made no sound as she trailed down the long carpeted stairs, and then echoed loudly as she crossed the polished floor of the reception-room. She slowly drew aside the heavy, muffling curtains and entered the library. The room was full of dancing lights and shadows from a crackling wood-fire, before which stood a man enveloped in a dark traveling-coat.

She advanced with slow steps to the centre of the room.

"Jacques," she said in a faint voice like that of a little child.

The figure before the fire wheeled and faced her.

"Jacques!" he exclaimed. "Jacques!" It was Yardham.

"You!" she said tonelessly.

He glanced at her in surprise and then at an antique clock ticking sedately in a corner. "Why, I believe I am a little ahead of time," he said easily; "but you see I anticipated that I might have a little stubbornness on your part to overcome, so I came early."

"No," declared Madeline in the same expressionless voice, "you came too late. I telephoned Jacques Veremont this morning. He promised to be here before ten. I thought you were he. He may come at any moment now."

"My dear girl"—Yardham's tone expressed much amusement, a little impatience and some tenderness—"my dear child, and did you think that would save you—oh, no, not from me, but from yourself? We are not living in the Middle Ages. I am not going to blindfold you and carry you off against your will. By all means, if you feel like it, let us wait for Mr. Veremont. It will make no difference."

He pushed forward a chair. "Won't you sit down?" he asked her. "You look tired."

She shook her head and remained standing, leaning heavily against a big chair just as she had done that never-forgotten afternoon in the library. He, however, tossed his cap upon a tabouret and seated himself. There was a silence.

"There won't be any—any violence?" begged Madeline at last, almost in a whisper.

Yardham laughed. "Why should there be?" he asked reassuringly. "He's a gentleman, is he not? And when a lady——"

There was a noise of wheels. Someone came quickly up the steps and rang the bell; there was the opening and shutting of doors and the sound of voices. Then steps on the polished floor of the reception-room, the curtains were pushed aside, and Jacques Veremont was in the room.

As he came forward quickly into the circle of light, Yardham rose from his chair and the eyes of the two men met. The artist, startled, confused, stepped backward.

Madeline found her voice. "Jacques,

a very old friend of mine—Mr. Yardham. Guy, Mr. Jacques Veremont."

The two men bowed. Then Jacques said:

"I beg your pardon, Madeline. I thought you were alone. I wouldn't have intruded——"

"Please don't disturb yourself on my account," broke in Yardham's level, courteous tones. "I am just leaving. I have to make the 1.30 train from Lenox tonight and have little time to waste." He turned to Madeline and held out his hand. "Good night, and—good-bye," he said.

"Good-bye," she answered dully. Her eyes were dazed with pain. What was he going to do? She watched him pick up his cap and stride toward the curtains. Without a single backward glance she saw him thrust them aside. Then the knowledge that he was going away from her—forever—struck her brutally like a blow. Her heart seemed to stop as in a hideous dream.

"Don't leave me!" Even to Madeline's own ears her voice sounded like a harsh scream of agony.

Yardham turned around. There was a moment of awful silence. Oddly enough, it was Veremont who spoke first. His voice seemed to come from a long way off.

"I am not entirely blind," he said. "I think you both owe me an explanation. You sent for me, Madeline. Why?"

But she did not answer and he turned to Yardham.

"Do you love her?" he asked simply.

Yardham's answer was quite as simple. "Yes," said he. "I have loved her for a long time."

Jacques's troubled eyes sought Madeline's. "What was it you wanted me to do, dear?" he asked.

"Oh, leave me, both of you——" she began, when Yardham interrupted her.

"No, Madeline," he said firmly. "There is to be no more shilly-shallying. You must choose between us—now."

"Yes," repeated Veremont mechanically. "You must—choose—between—us." His face had gone gray.

Madeline stared at the two as they

stood there not three feet apart, as if she had seen them for the first time. The situation reminded her of a story she had read somewhere about a dog forced to choose between two masters. She remembered how the poor beast had whined and looked into each face and irresolutely ran to first one man and then the other. She laughed hysterically.

"Be true to yourself, Madeline—that is all we ask," declared Jacques huskily. The words seemed wrung from him by pain. He half extended his hand as though he must help her over this rough place. She remembered that he never could bear to see her suffer. In a flash she saw. It would always be like that. He would always

be casting down his cloak that she might walk dry-shod. With the other, it would be she who must smooth out the crumpled rose-leaf, gather the flowers to be trampled on.

The two men were waiting. Which? To be helped as a comrade, revered as an ideal, loved as a woman or to be kissed and teased and made a plaything of? The god or the devotee?

Then she made the choice which women and dogs and you and I and fools of every degree will continue to make, till this sad old world spins round for the last time. With a gesture of complete self-abandonment she held out her hands to Yardham.

"Take me," she sobbed. "I am yours!"



BROKEN FRIENDSHIP

By Josephine Berkeley Craig

OUR friendship blossomed as a rose,
 Its petals all were dewy white;
 A breath from o'er a foul sea came,
 And lo! it perished in a night.

My heart is torn with silent pain;
 The flower I cherished now is dead;
 I hold it withered in my hand—
 Its fragrance with the past has fled.

Sometime in some fair garden spot
 I know 'twill live and bloom again,
 Its petals glistening with dew,
 Its fragrance sweeter for the pain.



"I UNDERSTAND that he recently married a woman lawyer."
 "Yes, and now he's a defendant for life."

THE TRAGEDY OF THE TRIVIAL

By Gertrude Lynch

"**W**HAT do you think of it?"
The owner of the ring
threw it across the restaurant table.

His vis-à-vis stopped its onward roll, picked it up, held it this way and that, toward the light and against it.

"Looks like a pretty good stone, but ain't it a bit off color?"

"Off color, man! Why, it's pure white. It's without a flaw. I'm willing to let it go cheap. I've my reasons."

He slammed his fist on the uncovered table, where little pools of liquid shone on the polished surface.

"It's past history. I said you could have it for a hundred; we'll say seventy-five. It's my loss, but it's been a losing game all through. Women? Why, they don't know their own minds. It's no wonder. They ain't got any to know. She just chucked me. Her best friend told me it was 'cause I wore blue ties. I dunno. I s'pose when a woman's lookin' for reasons blue ties is as good as any."

The listener remarked, to show sympathy as well as experience, that he knew another fellow who had been thrown over after a seven years' engagement because he wanted to wait another year.

Tom was not listening. The reference he had made to the best friend started a new train of thought. He took back the ring and thrust it deep into his pocket. "I've changed my mind, Jim. I believe I'll keep it."

He winked slowly and steadily at his friend and poured out another glass of water.

"I'm weary of these girls who have

a new beau every day. There's something wrong with 'em, you mark my words. They ain't stable; that's what they ain't. They're all right for sweet-hearts—but for wives! I know a girl, a friend of the—other, who ain't got a beau, never had one, in fact."

"Perhaps she don't care for men; some girls don't."

Tom looked consciously at himself in a mirror inset over the neighboring frieze of *lincrusta walton*.

"Oh, I'll look out for that, all right. She's shy, but a girl who ain't pestered with attentions don't lose her chance when it comes."

It was two days later that the pretty cashier of a downtown business house was met outside the door of her establishment by handsome Tom.

"Poor fellow!" she thought, as she saw him standing there. "He's taking it awfully to heart. I wonder if he knows she's engaged again?"

They met and after a smile of mutual greeting and comprehension, walked along a few blocks in silence.

"I stopped at your place and told your mother you was goin' out to dinner with me," Tom remarked after a while.

Jennie blushed and looked down. It was an unusual occurrence for her to receive an invitation of this kind, for her shyness was not alluring to the young men she met at parties, dancing and bowling clubs.

To break the ice of conversation, she attempted to lead the talk toward the deserter, but Tom stopped her abruptly.

"That's all over and done with. Never did care for her much—just

fancied her 'cause she was lively and kept things goin', that's all. Funny, ain't it, how a fellow thinks he cares for a girl and finds out he don't? He knows, though, when he's found the right one."

Tom was a floor-walker in a department-store. He was rather bullied by the superintendent and in turn took his revenge in the hours devoted to social intercourse on the weak of the other sex who chanced to cross his path.

His assertive manner seemed to Jennie a symbol of force. Being nerveless herself she found in his ready self-control, his apt reply to the unexpected situation, something strangely compelling. She accepted his explanation without question. She did not dare believe that he had any personal meaning in his last remark, but she fluttered a little at the mere possibility, and her pretty coloring, which even the confinement on the high stool in front of an iron grating could not utterly destroy, suffused her face from chin to pompadour.

When they were seated in a quiet corner of a restaurant and Tom had ordered a large steak, two cups of coffee and some buckwheat cakes with maple sirup, he looked at her with a duplicate of the admiring glance he had cast upon her in the car, but said little. It was not until he neared the end of the repast and was spearing raisins from a matrix of rice pudding that he remarked apropos of his thought rather than any verbal introduction:

"The trouble with her was that she never told the truth; she never meant to lie, but she couldn't, to save her life, look at things straight. In the light of subsequent events"—Tom liked the phrase and repeated it—"in the light of subsequent events I am inclined to believe that she is insincere and false all the way through."

He waited a moment until the rice pudding had disappeared.

"If I ever have another girl, she's got to be true. I won't stand for lies. I won't have her say one thing one minute and something else the next. She's got to tell me everything I want

to know, besides. Not that I'm curious." Tom, like his fellows, was both unconscious and disdainful of the quality scheduled as feminine. "But it's a man's right to know where his girl is, and who she's with, and how late she stays at places. I wouldn't respect a man that didn't stand by that."

Jennie blushed and said something indistinctly that sounded like flattery. Tom accepted it as such.

"I'm sure *you're* true blue."

There was silence between them again for a moment. Tom thrust his fingers deep into his waistcoat pocket, drew out a wad of tissue-paper and commenced to unfold it. When he had finished he threw the contents across the table.

"Ain't a bad stone, now, is it?"

She held it until the light struck its many facets, then tried it on her finger.

"How'd a girl feel about having a ring that was bought for another girl?" asked Tom tentatively.

"I don't know."

Jennie never had any decided opinions. Her speech was as negative as her experience and her desires.

Tom laughed. "Suppose you wear it and find out."

She blushed again, but did not withdraw the ring.

Tom was not a man for mere suggestion.

"You understand what I mean. A man don't give a girl a ring like that for fun. It binds her just as it does him."

Jennie looked at him coyly, while her round lips formed a round yes.

As they left the restaurant, Tom took her hand and tucked it under his arm.

"I'm going home with you and have it out with the old man. Bess kept me hangin' round, meeting her on corners and never asking me in for fear somebody in the house might talk. No more of that. I know what I want, and this time I ain't going to be played with."

Jennie had never brought an admirer home before, neither had she brought a diamond ring. To tell the

truth, the latter seemed to her of more importance. Every woman sooner or later secured a sweetheart and then a husband, but none of her acquaintances owned a ring so magnificent and eye-compelling. She felt it under her glove all the way home. When she sat in the tiny sitting-room and was supposedly listening to the description of Tom's prospects and achievements, as detailed to her approving parents, she was watching the circlet of gold, noting the cold brilliancy of the jewel, fascinated by that nameless delight in gems which is the inheritance of all women, of high and low degree alike.

Jennie's parents were as negative as herself. She had come honestly by her inheritance of commonplaceness, and Tom, with an intuitive grasp of the situation, announced his intention of marrying the daughter in lieu of asking permission. They were a little dazed by the unexpected good fortune. They had always believed that Jennie would some time draw a husband from the bran pie of circumstance, but that he should be handsome, dashing, with a fixed income and able to load her with diamonds—as they mentally phrased it, being not entirely devoid of imagination—was as great a surprise as it was a pleasing excitement.

After having accepted the hospitality of the home in the form of cold ham, ginger ale and slices of cheese, he put on his hat, again patted the old man on the back, a process performed frequently during the evening to put him at his ease, said "Bye-bye, governor," kissed the mother on both cheeks, separating the twin caresses by an emphatic "Be good to yourself," and then drew Jennie into the narrow hall, shutting the door in an assured manner.

When she returned her mother nodded approval.

"You ain't done so bad, Jen, after all. He's got an awful appetite and, Lord, ain't he masterful! You'll have to mind your p's and q's. I'm glad I brought you up all right. It would be awful hard for some girls to knuckle under. Let's see the stone again."

The two women held it under the

light, and after a minute the father advanced and looked over their shoulders.

"Shines all right, but you can't tell about di'monds. They're as uncertain as women. You think they're perfectly white until you put 'em up against other women, and then you sometimes find there's a yellow streak in 'em."

They paid no attention, and after a moment he said pettishly:

"I believe you care a lot more about the stone than you do the man."

"Diamonds don't give any trouble," said the mother mildly, "and you know where they are nights."

Jennie was still absorbed watching the prismatic rays in the stone, but presently she glanced hurriedly at the clock, and, startled at the lateness of the hour, held up her face for the nightly caress.

The days of Jennie's engagement passed uneventfully; Tom's absences caused no questions. When he came he was greeted unobtrusively, and they spent the evenings playing dominoes or checkers, or else they went to the houses of their friends. At some of these social affairs they met Bess, the deserter. Tom and she avoided each other conspicuously, and Tom's attentions to his fiancée were ludicrous in their exaggerated tenderness. He had many outspoken compliments for the benefit of the company in general and Bess in particular. He spoke of her sincerity, of her trust in him and her patience. He referred in the most complimentary terms to her neat, almost prim appearance, and her complexion—her two obvious attractions. Bess was a little thing whose hair was always at loose ends and ribbons awry. The only delight these encounters seemed to lack in Tom's eyes to make them truly attractive would have been in the enforced isolation of Bess, who had, unfortunately, two or three attendants. He would have preferred to see her a wall-flower, deserted and forlorn. He noted with satisfaction that none of the men who danced about

her was eligible, not one of them had his assured position and what he was pleased to speak of in the family circle as "his future," a problematical place bounded on the four sides by hope, ambition, vanity and belief in good luck.

"She'll never get such a ring as yours," said Tom one night as he bade farewell to Jennie after one of these little parties.

They had been talking of the recalcitrant one, and Jennie had ventured the assertion that she had been a very foolish girl, in which conclusion Tom acquiesced.

"Some girls don't know when they're well off," he answered, smoothing her cheek with a careless finger. It was one of his methods of saying good night and, after a moment, he sauntered away, lighting a cigar and whistling cheerily.

Jennie flew upstairs and into her room. It was late and she had to get up early in order to reach her desk in time. It was not until she had removed her waist and was beginning to uncoil her hair that she stopped, thunderstruck. The big, flashing stone had fallen from her ring. She couldn't believe it at first, and gazed distrustfully at the open space; sure enough, it was no longer there. She shook each of her outer garments and then looked in places where under no possible circumstances could it have lodged, in the inner compartment of her porte-monnaie, in the pocket of her skirt, concealed in the gathers, in the corners of the room, even between the leaves of a Bible opened on the bureau; then, lighting a candle, she went out into the hall, down the stairs to the front door. Opening that in turn she peered along the steps and up and down the sidewalk. Having accomplished nothing, she returned to her room, to begin the search all over. Finally she sat on the edge of the bed and remembered distinctly that the last time she had noticed the ring was on her way home. She had not put on her gloves, but had thrust her uncovered hands into her muff, and once at a crossing when she

turned to lift her skirt the light from a neighboring lamp had fallen on the precious stone, outlining it significantly against her black dress.

Her mother heard her moving about and came to the door.

"What is it, Jen?" she asked, still half asleep.

"Mother," gasped Jennie in a frightened tone, "I've lost my ring."

"Lost your ring!" The gravity of the situation overpowered the older woman. She came and sat in her nightdress and bare feet on the edge of the bed.

"You don't say! My, won't he be mad! He set a store by that ring. Told me once it would have to last you all your life; you'd never get another as good. Said when a man had to pay grocery bills he didn't have much left for gewgaws. That's true enough. Your father ain't give me anything but handkerchiefs since we were married. He used to be real generous before; never came that he didn't bring me——"

Jennie stopped the garrulous admissions by weeping softly at the foot of the bed.

"I'll never dare tell him. They say he's awful when he's mad. I know Bess told a friend of hers that he was. She said she was just forced to lie because she was afraid of him."

"When did you see it last?"

Jennie related the circumstance as she recalled it.

The mother thought a moment. "I'll slip on my clothes, and we'll go out and look. There's just a chance."

They took the midnight journey which ended in a fruitless result.

When they finally returned after rehearsing the situation in all its bearings Jennie complained of a severe headache.

The next morning she was not able to lift her head from the pillow, and it was not until late in the afternoon that her mother could bring her comfort.

"I've thought it all over, Jen, and I don't see but one way out of it. It's no use making a man mad if you can help it. That's the way I got on with

your father when we were first married—just let him think he was having his own way and keepin' things from him that wouldn't do him any good to know."

Jennie raised herself on the pillows.

"I've thought of this. We can't put an 'ad' in, for Tom might see it and he's as quick as a flash when it comes to suspicioning.

"Now, this is my idea. There's a place downtown where they sell stones dirt cheap. For ten dollars you could put one in that nobody could ever know from a real one. Mrs. Flamm, the butcher's wife, showed me the most beautiful one she bought there. The stones are some kind of French pebbles and with the same setting—ain't it lucky you didn't lose that?—nobody could ever tell. If the brightness wears off sometime in the future perhaps you won't mind telling him then—or getting a new one.

"I went and talked to the man this morning. He said lots of ladies was afraid to tell their husbands that they'd lost their stones and got false ones, and sometimes they wanted ready money and sold the real ones, pocketing the difference."

Jennie's eyes glowed and the harassed look left her face.

"I think," she said weakly, after a moment, "if I could have some toast and tea . . ."

Another month passed. Tom, blatant and egotistic, had again fallen under the charm of the deserter, Bess, who had in one hour's conversation convinced him that she had always really cared for him and that her refusal and second engagement were a matter of pique prompted by gossip. He liked the way she sought him out and humbled herself. Never before had she shown that she considered his attentions a compliment, but had, on the contrary, taken them as a matter of course.

This had jarred his sense of value. Jennie had pleased him better in this respect, but no other. Without analyzing the situation he realized that

Jennie bored him so that he made every excuse to spend his time away from her. She never urged him unduly, never asked him where he had been. Perhaps she did not care. She was not built for deep feeling, and even the depths of her shallow nature Tom had never reached, for between them was the ineradicable antagonism of temperament.

His defection was not long a secret from her. First there was a hint, then another and then another. The dear, familiar friend spoke of the gossip in regard to Tom's devotion to the recreant Bess. Once at a party she came upon them suddenly in a dark corner of the hall, whispering guiltily.

She said nothing. The loss of the holy estate of matrimony was much, but it was the other loss that kept her awake at night. The time was approaching when she would have to restore the property given with a certain understanding. If she had only told him in the beginning! Would he believe now that she had really lost it? Would he think her dishonest? Jennie was the possessor of the seven deadly virtues, and the law of *meum* and *tuum* occupied a high place in the category.

She knew that sometimes girls kept their engagement rings and presents. She knew, too, that men sometimes sued for their return. She could imagine Tom implacably hounding her to court. He would have little mercy. Then, too, there was the bitterness of Bess's tongue. Her little social clique was limited, but it was her world—its praise or blame all she knew. Its envy at her engagement and its ill-disguised contempt at her failure to keep her lover were intimate impressions on her mind. This would accentuate the contempt. Her fear was so intangible and yet so insistent that she did not even voice it to her mother, as if to make it more strenuous by expression.

But she had reckoned without Tom. Whatever his faults, they did not include indecision. He might be wrong, but he was never both wrong and un-

certain. When he saw that his flagrant attentions to Bess were unnoticed, that Jennie either did not or would not see them, he took the law into his own hands.

He met her late one afternoon and they went uptown together. He blurted his thoughts out on the way.

"Say, Jen, you can't be ignorant of the fact that Bess an' me's made up. You was a soothin' little thing an' I needed sympathy, but it was all a mistake, and when I learned that Bess had got riled at some fool gossip and really did care for me and wanted to have another chance, I realized all at once that she was the only girl in the world for me and that it would be wronging the three of us to keep to the present arrangement.

"I believe in hitting right out straight from the shoulder. You know me. I hate to feel that I'm hurtin' a woman, but when it's a choice of hurtin' two, why, of course a man's got to hurt the one he likes the least. That's plain, ain't it?"

Jennie had her face down and he could not see it.

"Come, Jen, don't take it that way. Say you'll forgive me an' let's swear eternal friendship. I'll make it all right with you later on."

Tom had some latent feeling of delicacy and did not mention to her the method he intended to adopt, which consisted in finding someone to take his place and in that way ease his conscience of any suspicion of double dealing.

Jennie pressed his arm convulsively.

"Don't throw me over, Tom. Let things go on. You may get over caring for Bess, as you did before. I'll wait. I'll never nag!"

Tom stopped short and drew her hand through his arm in a friendly manner. "That's not the way a man what's a real man does. That's a woman's way. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I'm goin' to say just this, and when I've said it you'll know that I couldn't.

"I don't love you as a man loves his wife, and I made up my mind long ago

that I never should. I was silly an' thought when Bess threw me down that I could learn to care for you in that same way, but it was only friendship—nothing else. That is all it ever could be even if Bess dropped me again tonight. I can't live a lie any longer, an' I ain't goin' to.

"Bess is the only one, an' if anything comes between us again—well, it's good-bye women forever, except for amusement. I'll never have another serious thought for 'em."

When they reached the house Jennie looked for the first time in his face. Her eyes were filled with tears and her hands clutched each other frantically.

"You mean it? You're going to jilt me?"

Tom patted her shoulder.

"Don't take it so, Jen. You're a sensible girl. Look at it in a sensible way. Think how hard it is for me. Lord, I don't enjoy it."

To prove his trepidation, Tom took off his hat and, though the wind was blowing chilly and boisterously, there were beads of sweat on his brow. He had earned his bread of freedom according to scriptural injunctions.

By the time he had replaced his hat Jennie was inside the door and half-way upstairs.

He waited a moment, then walked slowly along. He had gone half a block when he stopped suddenly.

"Pshaw!" he muttered slowly. "She forgot it, poor little thing, but she's straight as a die. She'll return it all right."

For the next ten days Jennie secluded herself from the world. She had obtained a leave of absence from business and she spent it in her home, except at nightfall, when she took a walk with one or both of her parents.

One day she received a packet directed to her in Tom's handwriting. She opened it tremblingly. It contained a necktie that she had crocheted and given to him. With it was a note:

DEAR FRIEND: I return the tie you gave me. I think when people's engagement is broken it is more honorable for both sides to send back the gifts which were given with the

understanding they were to be man and wife. Your friend,

TOM.

"What will you do?" asked her mother, to whom by this time Jennie had confessed her fear.

"I don't know." Jennie moved restlessly about the room. "What can I do? If I give it to him, he'll find out. If I keep it he'll come here and demand it, and if I say I lost the stone, he'll never believe me. He'll tell everybody. I'll never dare show my face. If I'd only told him in the beginning!"

Mrs. Darcy pleaded her apron nervously. "You know we ain't any money ahead. It takes all we can save for the endowment policy, and we've been extravagant about your clothes since you—thought of getting married. It's awful hard on a girl's waists to be engaged."

Jennie nodded, with a look of reminiscent understanding.

"I'm 'most ready to kill myself with the worry and uncertainty. I wish I'd never seen him or his old ring."

"Hush! Your father's coming."

The conversation was resumed later when they were alone.

"I've thought and thought and thought," at length said her mother, "and this is the only way out of it that I see. You can't go on wearing yourself to skin and bones forever, and you say you don't dare tell him."

"No," said Jennie, "I don't dare."

"Well, if I were in your place I'd go to Bess and take her the ring. She's such a flutterbudget that she'll not look at it closely. I can see her. She'll take and twist it around her finger once or twice, and when Tom comes she'll wave it in front of him—you know the way she does—and scream at him that she's got it again. Everyone knows that she's careless as can be, and you're just as careful."

Jennie was silent, thinking the subject over. She turned suddenly with a look of relief. "You take it to her. I don't feel as if I could see her wedding things and hear her talk about them. I've stood all I can."

It was then in the early evening and

Mrs. Darcy rose and put on her coat and hat. "I'll take it around now, and if Tom's there I'll just make the excuse that I came to call and give it to her at the door when I go out."

The two women kissed each other, as if on the verge of a separation of some importance.

Bess lived alone with her grandmother, who was old and deaf, attributes which accounted in part for the girl's wild ways, so those who were charitably inclined contended. When Mrs. Darcy was admitted she found the bride-elect with her hair rumpled more than usual and a thin shawl thrown over her bare shoulders. The room was a mass of wedding finery, chairs, tables, sofa covered with laces and ribbons.

"Why, Bess," ejaculated Mrs. Darcy as she sat down in the space that was hastily cleared, "ain't you terrible extravagant?"

Bess smiled and cocked her head on one side, while her unruly curls danced about.

"I'll never be married but once, for Tom's sure to outlive me and I want everything that I can get now."

"But the money—" In the class of society in which they moved personal questions were not tabooed.

"Oh, I get that all right."

"You don't mean Tom—?"

Mrs. Darcy was visibly shocked. Tradition is tradition, no matter where its roots may have taken hold.

"Tom—no, indeed," and Bess's face flushed. "Tom hasn't given me a thing this second time." She hesitated a moment and then looked squarely at Mrs. Darcy. "Not a thing, not even a ring."

It was Mrs. Darcy's turn to blush, which she did vividly.

"That's what I come about tonight, Bess. Jennie's sent you back the ring."

Bess took it and glanced at it with unexpected care. She turned it carefully to the light before she slipped it on her finger.

Mrs. Darcy had wrestled with the situation through a sleepless night and

a worried day. She had not told Jennie her determination, but something, the conscience that in critical moments finds the anesthetic which has been sufficient for trivialities inadequate, was aroused. She moved nearer Bess. The grandmother was asleep in her chair, her fingers softly clutching the blue folds of a pretty sash with a child's pleased smile on her wrinkled face.

"Bess, I've got something I want to tell you about that ring. Jen lost the stone out of it, and that's the real reason she didn't return it before. She was afraid of Tom. You know he's a terrible masterful man. I'd hate, old as I am, to anger him, and it laid poor Jen flat on her back thinking of it."

Bess was still looking closely at her engagement finger. Mrs. Darcy could not tell whether she was angry or indifferent. Her heart stood still with dread while she waited. The whole fabric of their social life was at stake.

"You see how good the false stone is. It cost us a bit of money. Jen paid a whole week's salary for it."

"What was Jen afraid of?" asked Bess curiously, after a silence which made Mrs. Darcy squirm.

"I don't know. What are women afraid of? I used to be. I suppose it's an inherited fear. Men get milder as they get older. They've been up against the world and had so many hard knocks themselves that they cry quits at home."

Bess nodded her head impatiently; it was easy to see that she had little sympathy with a state of affairs that implied a lack of feminine finesse. She came and crouched at Mrs. Darcy's feet and, in her nearness, the latter read a truce to hostility at least.

After a moment she spoke quickly, as was her wont.

"You know the night Jen lost the diamond. I'd made a bet with Sam Parks—he was my escort—that Tom wouldn't kiss Jen good night. You see,

we all knew that Tom was still in love with me and really didn't care for Jen. We followed them home and, as they were crossing the long walk, I saw Jen pick up her dress. A minute after I noticed the diamond a-shining in the mud. I picked it up without a word to Sam, pretending to fix my rubber. When I saw Jen again she had a new stone in and I guessed right away what she'd done, but still I said nothing. I was thinking."

Bess hesitated a moment, then waved her hand toward the chairs with their draperies of new clothes.

"Well, I did the same thing. I reasoned it out to myself that when I got the ring back all the crowd'd think it was the same one I had before, and, after all, it ain't having a diamond so much as it is having people know you've got one that's important."

While she was speaking Mrs. Darcy connected the expansive gesture she had just used with a question she herself had asked in the beginning of the conversation. She intimated it curiously.

"You mean you sold the stone and bought these?"

Bess nodded. It was a relief to tell her secret to someone whom she knew could not betray her.

"Every cent of it. I'd never got a trousseau if I hadn't, and a girl ain't married but once."

Mrs. Darcy became suddenly conscious of the waiting Jen and the good news she had to take back. She rose and kissed Bess with a haste which did not conceal her admiration.

"You're a smart one, Bess," she said, with no trace of the agitation and alarm from which she had suffered so long. "You've got my best wishes. You're the girl for Tom—Jen ain't. He needs someone who knows how to get her way and won't be bullied. What his eye don't see his heart won't feel. He'll end by being henpecked. You mark my words!"

Bess nodded understandingly.



THE OLD FLAME

By Raymond Lee Harriman

IT was apparent that John Blaisdell, of Bangor, Maine, was out of place in the Colombo. His lean, sinewy figure contracted itself in distrust at its surroundings. Upon every hand, through the wavering tiers of smoke in which the restaurant swam, he met unfamiliar faces—uncharted strangers they were, destinies never to travel over his road. From every one of these creatures, men and women alike, the wholesome bloom of life had gone. Some bore features misshapen by lust; some, worn in the struggle for existence; some, set doggedly upon unfulfilled desires. To John Blaisdell they were all unreal—unreal as the phantoms that had swarmed his fever but a month ago. They had assembled, it seemed, not so much to eat and drink as to huddle their pitiable souls together by common consent; to make believe that they were happy; to pretend, like children, that their joys were abundant so that their lives might be for a brief space more bearable. John Blaisdell raised his eyes to the woman who faced him.

"Do you come here often, Minnie?" he asked.

She met him openly. "Every night."

His thin lips, formed by a certain agreeable sternness, tightened, and the hand in his lap gripped his napkin.

"Why did you bring me here?"

The question caught her unawares. Her lids fluttered—dropped.

"I—I—wanted you to see," she stumbled, and triumphed over her confusion with a smile.

That smile! It pierced his heart, warming its chilly throb like a sun-ray aslant. That smile! He palpitated

with the soft rush of memories—a dove-like flock—that its magic evoked. That smile! It struck off the burden of middle age, made him forget his prematurely gray hair. That smile! He responded to it and again became a youthful lover. That smile! The sweetheart of then, the woman of now, sprang forth at the parting of those lips. . . .

The waiter came, sliding a dish of faded olives before them and filling their glasses with the dingy water from the carafe. The spell was broken. The woman smiled no longer. John Blaisdell's fancy was overwhelmed by the bustle of dishes and the feverish chatter of the crowd. The pianist in the corner struck up, yet made no music, serving only to lend a sort of underlying rhythm to the shoddy gaiety. After a while the waiter brought the gummy purée, which they hardly tasted.

"And this is your New York!" he mused.

"You aren't pleased?"

"No; frankly, I'm not." He jingled his fork against his knife. "But then you won't be here much longer. You're coming back with me."

Her brows lifted and she made a little whimsical gesture of uncertainty with her shoulders. It was an old mannerism, and though unfavorable, cheered him.

"Aren't you?" he pressed.

"I can't answer you quite yet. Perhaps later tonight I—"

"Then you still resent. You can't, for—"

"No, no, John," she interposed. "My heart could never hold such

feelings. It's absurd to think of it in that light. You ought to know me better than that."

"It was the one patch of baseness in my life," he confessed, "and I shall always feel the shame of it. I jilted you, Minnie, I— No, no, don't stop me. It is a great relief to hear my own voice say it. You don't know the unspeakable load it takes from me. I jilted you."

The woman reached for a breadstick and began to snap it into tiny pieces. Her hands were white, flexible, and in every motion revealed the beauty of capability.

"I was having my first taste of success—that made the difference. I invented other reasons for my change and added lies to the first guilt. I thought that you were not good enough, not grand enough to share my prosperity."

"John!"

"Hear me out. I hold it a privilege that you allow me to speak."

The waiter came, tearing through the fringes of smoke, and brought them two segments of fish with his thumb in the sauce. He disappeared, taking his thumb with him. The man at the piano began to play a rag-time tune. To John Blaisdell these hammering syncopations were but an increase in the hectic unrest of the Colombo.

"It was a shameful thing, Minnie," he resumed, "but now I hope to make my reparation to you. It can never be complete, I know, and I am tardy—nearly twenty years in coming to you; but you won't deny me?"

She moved her glass round and round upon the cloth, peering into the tinkling ice. Once she moistened her lips. A reply seemed very difficult.

"There is someone else?" he hazarded.

Her eyes, clear and brown and shadowy like the Autumn woods, turned to him, full and wide with candor. "Yes, John, there is someone else."

The subject was avoided during the following courses of the cheap table d'hôte. Both took the opportunity to

adjust their relations to a new angle. The music from the piano ceased and after a while struck up again into a popular waltz-song. The performer at the instrument, a large, bony man, lounged before the keys, pounding with a languid mechanism, as one surfeited into a lethargy. The laughter, the rattle of dishes, the sharp drone of talk never abated in pitch. The tiers of tobacco-smoke thickened one upon the other. Nothing was genuine here but the sham. At a near-by table a young woman began to hum the tune of the piano, swaying her head to the rhythm, her lips parted in a rigid, painted smile. Her merriment was as artificial as the palms that decorated the Colombo. Presently she forgot her part, and, at an unguarded moment as she gazed into her cocktail, her mouth drooped bitterly.

John Blaisdell gave his companion a long scrutiny. He felt by vivid contrast a thrill of wonder that the woman who faced him was still so honest both in fiber and in expression. One look into her frank eyes dispelled any misgiving that he might have. She had made no compromise with life, had gone on refining, with an inherent nobility, her every-day greatness of spirit—the refuge of the obscure. In her smooth ruddiness of cheek one seemed to feel her inner patience at her own lot as it ripened through her whole being.

"I am tardy," Blaisdell mused, "but I had to come to you. I was driven."

She questioned him with a whimsical, puzzled look.

"The fever," he explained. "It's a queer thing. I had a whole month of it and it seemed to burn me away until there wasn't anything left but the image of you. Wasn't it strange? It's one of those unaccountable thrusts that life gives you to make you do something that you had never planned to do. Since my sickness you have been always in my mind, always—why, I love you again. Only, it's different this time, a bit more worthy, I think—if you will allow me to say that."

A troubled smile came with her answer. "I am afraid, John, that it would have been better had you stayed away. We are almost strangers in everything but an old, old memory."

"Memory!" he exclaimed in a tone that in spite of himself carried a gentle rebuke, "memory! I hold it a more substantial thing—at least on my part."

"I chose the word poorly," she said hurriedly, unwilling to cause him even the slightest hurt. "I—I——"

Her explanation was delayed by the waiter, who brought them crackers and cheese and demi-tasse.

"I meant," she began again, "that we have been separated for so long, that our ways have diverged so——"

She stopped abruptly. A man was drawing up a chair to join them at the table. A flush of color mounted to John Blaisdell's pale cheek as he recognized him as the pianist, and he secretly resented this intrusion that the Colombo permitted. The woman, quick to detect Blaisdell's undercurrent of feeling, introduced the newcomer—Mr. Delory.

On the instant Blaisdell was disagreeably attracted to the pianist, a man of powerful physique. The face was structurally magnificent, almost heroic in its muscular ridges and gaunt hollows, yet—yet—the stamp of failure was unmistakably upon it. It never wholly freed itself from a certain numb weariness. Of this apathy, however, there was none in the eyes. When he would draw those heavy, waxen lids up under the brows the spirit came to the surface, blazed out, unquenchable, unfathomable, with all the intensity of self-rancor.

Affability, it became plain, was not one of Delory's characteristics. He seemed oblivious of Blaisdell's presence, directing no talk to him. In fact, he spoke to the woman but two or three times during his brief stay at the table, deriving, it appeared, a sort of moody rapture in merely watching her, in being near her. As he lolled in his chair, one flail-like arm dangling until the hand almost brushed the floor,

while the other raised at intervals a cigarette to his lips, those eyes fastened, with a fierce, compelling appeal, upon her own. There were moments when they were so much alive that they seemed to detach themselves from him and become two separate beings. John Blaisdell, a silent spectator, compressed his lips, more in sharp thought than displeasure.

Delory, after a lapse of ten minutes, was obliged to return to his livelihood. He left with a low "Good night" to the woman, a sideward bow to Blaisdell and shuffled back to the piano.

"So he is the someone else!" remarked Blaisdell.

The woman nodded, with a little air of defiance.

"Er—he doesn't look—er—that is, he is not what one would call a successful man."

"No," she reflected, "he isn't. He never will be. I believe that he is talented, but he lacks that something that can bring talent to a focus upon some definite accomplishment. One day he starts an oratorio; the next, a coon-song; the next, an opera; the next . . ." She wandered off into a little smile of indulgent fondness.

Blaisdell frowned as he lighted a cigar. He was a man who had turned his life into material profit, and had no patience with persons of temperament.

"Don't tell me, Minnie, that you intend to face a life of hardship with that man. It's absurd. It's impossible. You come here every night just to please him, I suppose?"

Her lips formed a "Yes" over her demi-tasse, but made no sound.

"You are not the woman to live in this atmosphere. I can't bear to think of you always remaining here. It's not your place; these people are not your kind. I want you to turn your back upon it, for your own sake and—yes—I confess, for mine, too. I can give you the comforts, the position, even the luxuries you ought to have, and affection, too, that is this time sure of itself. You are coming back to Bangor with me, aren't you, Minnie?"

"I know," she pondered absently,

"that the world judges a man by what he acquires, by the power he can command. Yet once in a while we find those who claim us to cast our lives their way for no other reason than that they have failed, that they must go on failing and bearing their disappointments to the end. We find them dull—and courageous."

"Yes," said Blaisdell mistily.

"I feel— But there, John, I'm not going to explain myself. It doesn't become me. Perhaps I am foolish, very, very foolish; yet . . ."

Her gaze drifted about the restaurant from group to group and finally rested upon Delory. He was playing some more rag-time, probably his own wanton improvisations, a jangle of chromatic chords in the bass and of sliding modulations and shifted accents in the treble. Blaisdell, intercepting the woman's look, recalled with a pang that once, twenty years ago, a girl had turned her eyes to him with that self-same message. And now—it was in-

credible!—she bestowed it, with all its woman's steadfastness and tenderness, upon that massive, uncouth, pathetic man at the piano, pounding those noisy keys night after night for his livelihood. Blaisdell could not understand, could never understand; but in that one look filling her honest eyes he knew that he was rejected and that to press her further for an answer would bring unnecessary pain to them both.

"Perhaps," he said, in a half-found voice, "perhaps you are foolish. But then, I suspect that we all like our women that way."

Her eyes glistened with a rush of gratitude. Her hands were clasped before her upon the edge of the table, and, involuntarily, John Blaisdell, of Bangor, Maine, reached over and stroked them. Then, startled at himself, he looked about, fearing that other eyes had witnessed the caress.

But they don't notice such things at the Colombo.



A YEAR AGO

By Elsa Barker

HOW strange it seems that one brief year ago
Indifferently I watched you passing by,
Nor dreamed that in your half-averted eye
Love's universe was mirrored! Even so
Bloom lilies by the stream whose overflow
Shall sweep them from their moorings, and untie
Their roots from the home soil. A bee may fly
To windward of a rose-bush and not know.

With all his wisdom, surely Love is blind!
You were the messenger of Destiny
That paused before my dwelling undivined.
A year ago your spirit was to me
The pearl a diver risks his life to find—
And passes in the darkness of the sea.

THE MISADVENTURES OF MOLLY

By Helen Rowland

I SUPPOSE there are worse things which might happen to one. For instance, one might be born with a harelip, or a crooked back, or fiery hair; but, next to those, the most uncomfortable thing I know of is to be endowed with a *retroussé* nose—and *dignity*.

Of course, a *retroussé* nose may be looked at from a great many points of view. For example, my brother Bob contends that mine is a "pug," and Jack—that is, Mr. Pennington—calls it "piquant," while Passionby, the poet, insists that it is "psychic." That is because Bob is a pessimist and Mr. Passionby is an idealist, and Jack—but all this has nothing to do with the dreadful affair which I was about to relate.

Oh, yes, it might have been worse. I might have been run over by an Elevated train, or fallen off a ferry-boat, or been arrested for shoplifting; but barring these, I know of nothing more tragic or mortifying than to find yourself sitting across the table from the man you hate most in the world and whom you have, just twenty-four hours previously, dismissed with scorn and vowed never to speak to again!

It happened in this way. The day after the quarrel I woke up with a headache. I don't know what could have been the cause of it; for I ought to have been perfectly happy at having found out *before* marriage, instead of *after*, just what an overbearing disposition and violent temper Jack Pennington had.

I'm sure the headache would have passed off if the whole family had not

been against me, and Marie had not come in just then to say that Madame Louise had arrived with my wedding gown and wanted me to try it on. Imagine trying on a wedding gown—which you are never going to wear! And then Bob burst in, with a blue velvet box in his hand, and stepped on my most acute nerve by kissing me on my nose and presenting me with a wedding gift—from Tiffany's! I looked at it a moment, and then at Bob, and then I buried my face in the bedclothes.

"Why, the poor little paradox!" exclaimed Bob. "She's all unstrung."

"I'm n-not!" I declared hotly.

But with things like that happening all morning, you can readily see why I got dressed and out of the house as soon as possible. Besides, I knew the fresh air would do my head good. I felt too tired to walk, and too restless to sit still on a Central Park bench, and mother had taken the carriage, so after I had gone a few blocks I got on a surface car, with no particular motive except to keep moving—and forgetting.

If all roads lead to Rome, all street-cars lead to Parkham's. We were fairly in front of the fascinating windows of that shop before I had realized where I was going. Then suddenly I remembered that I had intended to do a lot of shopping that day. So I put up my finger and got off and was in the crush around a bargain counter five minutes later. It was just what I needed. And the funniest part of it was that in the excitement I became so interested—I suppose shopping has become a habit with me in the last few weeks—that I forgot I was not

going to be married at all, and ordered a lot of things sent home that no confirmed old maid would ever find use for.

Before I had half finished, or the exhilaration had begun to wear off, it was one o'clock. I looked at my watch in dismay, for I had realized that I certainly could not get home in time for luncheon, and I had promised mother to be there to meet a lot of people. I didn't want to meet people, anyhow. They would all congratulate me and want to see my wedding presents and talk about Ja—Mr. Pennington. I couldn't stand it!

I stood for a moment, undecided, on a street corner. Then I suddenly remembered Colby's. Colby's is a little restaurant in the very top story of a huge sky-scraper only half a block from Parkham's, where you get the nicest things to eat and where Ja—he and I had gone several times for luncheon. On the impulse of the moment I made up my mind to go to Colby's and get a cup of chocolate and some toast, though heaven knows I was never less hungry in my life. That's the pathetic and tragic part of this world. No matter how exalted or miserable you are, you have just got to go on eating three meals a day. It's a conventional habit, I suppose, that obsesses one, like brushing one's teeth and reading the newspaper and following the fashions. You'll go on swallowing roast beef and potted ham and hot muffins and chicken-liver omelets, day after day, when you are pining for nothing so much as a glass of nice, cold, unadulterated poison.

There was a terrible crush in the elevator, of course. And a woman with a purple feather on her hat glared at me so because my chatelaine caught in her laces, that I stepped on one of her toes—purposely—and crunched it hard! I felt just like crunching things hard. When we reached the top floor the disagreeable thing pushed by me with a shove and a vicious poke of her elbow that nearly made me reel back against the side of the elevator. And

then, to cap the climax, she caught the head waiter's eye and he gave her the only vacant seat left in the place. All of a sudden my eyes became blurred. I fancy it must have been my headache—but I couldn't see a thing. I only heard the head waiter saying in my ear that if I didn't mind sitting at the table with a gentleman, there was another place. I was so weak that I could have sat opposite a unicorn or a Hottentot; so I nodded blindly, and mechanically followed him through that crowd of feeding anacondas and sank down like a rag in the chair he pointed out.

Then I glanced up—and *there he was!* No, not the head waiter, but Jack Pennington, the most overbearing, ill-tempered man in New York! And the head waiter had told me it was a GENTLEMAN! For just a second, I shut my eyes and clutched my pocketbook. Then I opened them and stared straight through him.

There's one thing I like about Colby's. No matter how crowded the place is, you can always get served in a moment. When that beautiful waiter, with the red nose and the slidy chin, bent over me at that awful crisis and relieved the atmosphere, before it went off like a gun, by calling my attention to the menu, I could have flung my arms about his neck and wept on his turn-down collar. I lifted my eyes right off Jack Pennington's face and planted them firmly on the lunch-card.

"Consommé, please," I said to the waiter in a firm voice. And then I turned to arrange my wraps and things. I don't know what happened in the next few moments. When I had unhooked my jacket and taken off my gloves, I buried myself in the menu-card; and it wasn't until the waiter reappeared that I noticed that I had been reading it upside down.

The darling waiter held a tray containing a big silver tureen and two plates. It didn't occur to me as odd, until he put the whole thing down in front of Ja—that man!

I must say that whatever Jack's failings he has a lot of presence of mind. And of course it wasn't the waiter's

fault that we had both ordered consommé in the same breath.

I drew a quick breath and opened my lips to explain. Then I shut them tight again and sat as still as a rock. I simply couldn't speak. Jack didn't try. If he had dared—just dared!—after I forbade him ever to speak to me! He merely lifted the top of the tureen and ladled out a plate of that unholy liquid for me and then another for himself. He did not even glance at me as he handed my plate to the waiter, and I'm sure that he couldn't have noticed that I never swallowed a mouthful of the hateful stuff, but just kept lifting the spoon to my lips and putting it back again, like the puppets in the Punch and Judy show. How a man can devour a whole plate of soup, when his heart— But of course he hadn't any heart, or he never would have acted like that—and then eaten consommé!

Well, I've read in ancient history of victims being entertained at dinner by their prospective murderers just before the execution; but I never really understood their feelings before that gruesome luncheon at Colby's. And that was where my nose came in. Tell me yourself, could you assume a proper air of dignity if you were perfectly conscious that the man opposite you had once remarked that "the higher you hold your chin the funnier your nose looks"? *Could* you? That remark came back to me like an avenging ghost or a shot out of the dark. Every time I tried to compose myself it stood up and winked at me. And every time I jerked my chin up I would try to hold my nose down, until I got the nervous jumps.

The soup came to an end at last—I suppose the world will, too, in time. At last the waiter took the tureen away and returned for my next order. I could see plainly that that horrid man expected me to go straight through all the courses. But I made a desperate mental effort and skipped the fish and turned the lunch-card over. Then it suddenly dawned upon me that what I had come in there for was chocolate and toast. The relief of having a definite

idea was so great that I glanced up with a broad smile. But the waiter had disappeared. When he came back again he was carrying two plates of fish on his tray, one of which he deliberately and carefully set down in front of me.

I was too weak to protest—too furious! "That man" had evidently given an order for me; had had the audacity to take advantage of the situation and my helplessness to keep me sitting there opposite him. I glanced up at him with eyes of fire and scorn. And what do you suppose he was doing? Shaking his head at me violently with the most mournful expression. So he hadn't. He had given only his own order and the waiter had misunderstood. And there I was, eating the fish of charity! I leaned back for a moment and closed my eyes. Then I shook myself and sat up again and began to nibble the fish desperately. Of course I am not afraid of a waiter, nor even of his opinion; but somehow one doesn't like to lay one's life secrets bare to the person who serves one's salad and steak. And it was either that or go through with that miserable luncheon from fish to coffee, or else—but I had vowed never to speak to Jack Pennington and I mentally declared I'd die first.

The rest of the luncheon didn't go so badly. It was embarrassing to have to point at the olives, instead of asking the man opposite you to pass them and to have to request the vinegar by mental telepathy and to demand the chili sauce by the eye-language. However, Jack does know how to order a luncheon; and when a man remembers so perfectly all your peculiar little fancies and particular tastes and—even when you have stopped speaking to him and he has gone out of your life forever—does not forget that you like your potatoes *au gratin* and your roast rare, and one lump of sugar in your coffee and always take a chocolate frapé for dessert—well, it is rather touching. Really, it might have passed off without any tragic results and have been forgotten forever, if it had not been for the bill. When the waiter brought that and set

it down beside Jack's plate my soul rebelled at last—and I rose to action.

"Waiter," I said in my most forbidding voice, "where is my check?"

The poor fellow looked at me almost in astonishment.

"Bring it," I commanded, fixing him with a frigid glance, "at once."

"But—certainly, madam."

Oh, for the poise, the *éclat*, the perfect manners of a waiter! Without the quiver of an eyelid he took the bill away again, and returned bearing two tiny silver salvers, each containing a slip of paper. Mechanically, I picked up the check nearest me and opened my purse. Oh, fate of the ill-fated! Oh, the little gods of laughter! I stared into the empty cavern of that silver bauble as I would have at a snake—or an ex-fiancé. But the quarter and the four dimes in its bottom glittered back at me with merciless contempt. And they would have paid for a cup of chocolate and toast! If it had *only* been a silk petticoat, or a diamond cross, or a lace handkerchief, instead of soup and fish and chocolate frappé! I couldn't ask them to take it back again, could I? I couldn't order them to send it C. O. D.

My horrified eyes turned from my pocketbook to the waiter, from the waiter to the bill; from the bill they raised themselves to—Jack. But he was quite too engrossed to see me. He was leisurely taking the last sip of his demi-tasse. I could not drag my eyes away from him, but just sat there staring blankly, while he turned the tiny cup about thoughtfully in his fingers and lifted it again to his lips. Then he looked up—and he choked! The coffee-cup dropped with a clatter to the table. The waiter rushed for a carafe of water. I jumped up and tore for the elevator. As my chair tottered and overturned behind me, I heard something snap and rip, but I rushed on madly, blindly.

How many miles is it from the top floor to the main floor of a New York sky-scraper? It seemed hours that I stood there with my eyes glued to the wrought-iron door and my heart

thumping in my throat. When at last the car *did* come and I *did* get inside it I sank down on the leather seat with a little groan. And—there in front of me, stood—that man!—calmly, imperturbably taking a cigarette from his case and looking as though nothing had happened! Worse still, when we reached the ground floor he had the audacity to stand back and let me pass and to—*look at me!* I tossed my chin, without a thought of my nose, and dove out of the door. Nothing on earth could have stopped me or caught up with me—if I had not suddenly stumbled and glanced down. Then I knew what the ripping sound had meant. There, about my feet, lay a full yard of white ruffled *petticoat!* And I was in the very middle of the street. I made a desperate effort to move, but I couldn't. I heard a bell clanging wildly, and dimly saw an electric car whirling down upon me. I wanted to scream. I wanted to run, but I couldn't stir.

Then, just as everything was turning gray, I felt a strong hand grasp my arm and heard Jack's voice crying: "Come, Molly. Come for your life!"

But I only clutched my skirts and stood like Samson.

"I don't want to live," I moaned. "I want to die!"

And with that I felt myself lifted bodily and jerked into space. When I opened my eyes I was leaning against a lamp-post, clinging to my skirts like a drowning man, and Jack was trying to stand on all four sides of me at once so that people couldn't see. That would have touched anybody! I dropped one side of my skirts and caught hold of his arm—tight, tight!

"Jack," I moaned weakly. "I love you—I will always love you, if—if you'll call a cab!"

Of course I am going to marry him. When a man has saved your life it is no more than grateful to do that; besides, nothing else would make it possible for me to meet face to face any man who had seen—who had witnessed—who knew so much of my inner life.

A QUESTION OF DEGREE

By Frederick Orin Bartlett

THEORETICALLY, there was \$50,000 in cash in the vaults of the Ashmere National Bank. But John P. Harbin, the president, who sat before his roll-top desk blinking at nothing at all from eyes grown heavy for lack of sleep, knew that unless the turbulent market went strongly "bull" before its close this afternoon the money would never be found there. If, on the other hand, all went well, his losses would be covered, the cash returned, and the market from that time on to him as though it did not exist. It seemed to him that every time he lifted his eyes to glance out the half-open door he saw the gray eyes of the cashier upon him. The latter's gaze came to him as particularly significant later in the day when he saw him look up quickly and nervously after scanning the first edition of the afternoon paper. He was even impelled to rise guiltily and close the door against this almost impudent stare.

Harbin was an honest man at heart. He even felt himself to be an honest man at present. He had been unwise, that was all—decidedly unwise. He had taken the money as a loan and tomorrow everything would be all right again.

His plan was simple; he had ordered his agents to cash in at the close of the day and he would come down to the bank that very night and put the money back in the tiny steel drawers in the vaults. He wouldn't even wait until morning, for he felt it would drive him mad to have to face his wife with that money in his possession.

So he waited by the telephone on his

desk, his face now pale, now flushed, as the messages came to him over his private wire. His chubby hand turned over and over again the heavy charm which dangled from his gold chain. It contained a lock of his wife's hair, and somehow his fingers always sought this in moments of great tension, as though it were her hand. It steadied him.

In those hours before three in the afternoon he lived days. He felt as though the market were being manipulated to no other end than to torture him. Fear trod upon the heels of hope as the bitter struggle of the magnates was reflected in the quotations. Outside, he heard the noisy clamor of the newsboys as they shouted their special editions. He was but a minnow in this current which was being chopped into a maelstrom by the floundering of interests overtopping his in whale-like proportion. And yet, if he had not staked so much in dollars he had staked all else in life most dear: his reputation, the happiness of his home, perhaps even his life.

The beads of perspiration stood out in fat globules upon his forehead; his veins had become whipcords. He had none of your true gambler's stuff in him; his nerves refused to steady under the strain.

A fresh source of torment came to him in the uncanny impulse to call in the cashier and tell him all. It was the old psychological temptation of the murderer to shout his crime, of the man on a high building to leap into the chasm below. He gripped the arms of his chair, breathing deeply. He had never liked Gage. During the last few

weeks this dislike had grown into suspicion. There was something in the man's eyes not quite direct. They followed one closely with almost a malicious gleam. If ever he got out of this hole, he intended to keep a close watch upon the man.

The climax came swiftly. In one final raid the bears were routed—routed beyond his highest hopes. When the market closed he sank back limp with joy. He was saved—rescued from the one big mistake of his career. A hundred details of a life which had grown commonplace flooded in upon him now with new interest. The sun streaming in at the windows, the buzzing confusion of the city streets, the shuffling of feet in the outer office, the jingle of distant telephones, were all glad some notes in this new world. Nothing more remained for him to do save to secure the cash from his agents and after dinner come back to the bank vaults with it.

In his exhilaration he rang up his wife and proposed that she come in town to dinner. Then he changed his mind and rang her up again to say that somehow he felt like having dinner at home. But he felt that he must do something to express his happiness, and so he determined to take her a box of roses, and perhaps if he saw something pretty at the jeweler's to take that along. He wished her to share his new-found joy. He put on his hat and coat and stepped briskly out of his office. At the door he met Gage, with his old slouch hat drawn down over his eyes.

The man looked a bit pale, and instinctively Harbin turned one side to avoid him. He came to him like a dash of cold water. But the cashier stepped forward and spoke, almost as though he had been waiting for this.

"Great times in the market, eh?" he asked, with a clumsy attempt to appear indifferent.

"Yes, yes," Harbin answered curtly. "Good many heads fell that last hour, I guess."

"Well, and I suppose some were saved from falling."

"Think the fight is over?"

"I don't know anything about it, Gage," Harbin answered coldly.

He pushed past the man almost rudely. The fellow looked like a bank robber in that old hat. He really should dress more respectably. It might give the bank a bad reputation to see its men about in such rigs. He must speak to him about it some day.

Harbin went directly to his brokers and received from them \$50,000 in cash. This he put in his grip. The remainder, his profits, he took in a cheque. Then he hurried away from their congratulations.

He took dinner with his wife and appeared to her ten years younger than he had that morning. She remarked upon it and he kissed her into pleased silence. The table bloomed with two dozen rich red roses which perfumed the whole room. He chattered away like a man of twenty on his honeymoon, until his wife caught the infection and returned with girlish phrases and tricks of speech which she had forgotten these ten years. If ever there was a happy, solidly honest man it was Harbin as he sat there facing his wife. He couldn't have been tempted with a million dollars.

But somehow when, later in the evening, he left with his hand-bag, much of the feeling of guilt returned to him. As he went down the street he felt as though he looked like an absconder—as though everyone must know that he was carrying in that bag \$50,000 belonging to the bank. Then a new fear seized him: suppose he should be robbed before he had time to return the money? All his good intentions would then have come to naught. A victim of theft, he would still stand before the world as a thief himself even at the moment when he was deeming his fault. He studied keenly every passer-by and moved aggressively. The most innocent of strangers took on for him the appearance of thieves. By the time he reached the bank his nerves were again on edge.

Here another unforeseen danger loomed up. If he should be detected

in the bank before he had time to make himself known to Garrity, the watchman, he might be shot as a robber. The money in his possession would be conclusive evidence of guilt. There would be nothing on his dead body which could prove whether he was going in or coming out.

This danger nearly drove him back. He paused, wondering whether, after all, it might not be safer to wait until the morning. But if he did so, Gage, who always reached the bank early, might have occasion to visit the vaults and so discover the loss. No, he must get the money back at once, no matter what the present risk.

He cautiously fitted his key into the outer door and stepped within to the dimly lighted waiting-room. He saw the iron gratings and the low light through them to the safe beyond his office. When he had closed the door behind him he listened for the watchman's steps, but all was as silent in there as within the vaults themselves. He moved forward, unconsciously treading on tiptoe, every sense alert. In this way he crossed to the inner door, which he unlocked, and so on to his own office. The place looked different at night. He felt like an intruder even at his own desk. The continued silence grew oppressive and so pregnant with suggestion that he dared not lift his voice again to call for Garrity. He came out of his office and made directly for the vaults. Here he came upon the prostrate body of the watchman, his head in a pool of blood. The doors stood wide open.

His first impulse was to turn on his heel and run as though he had knocked the man down himself. He dropped the bag and it fell noisily to the floor. This roused him to action, and hastily opening it, he crowded the bills into tills of the vault. Then he stood irresolute, not daring to stoop and feel the watchman's pulse, as he was naturally prompted to do. If the man should regain consciousness for even a second he could not help but photograph his face. That meant prison just so surely as he stood there.

Then a new thought broke in upon him—the deed had been committed, and to all intents the money he had just replaced had been stolen. If he should put it back again in his bag, the blame would all rest upon the unknown robber. In his present position he was running all the danger of the actual criminal; why, then—

He fell back several paces, breathing quickly. No, he must leave—leave at once. There was nothing he could do without endangering himself. He could not notify the police, could not even revive the watchman.

As he was leaving, his coat caught on the iron door and he wrenched himself free with all the terror of one who feels a detaining hand. As he did so his feet scuffed against something which he stooped to pick up. It was an old slouch hat; a gray slouch hat. He thrust this in his pocket and made his way to the street.

The cool night air revived him somewhat, but he had covered several blocks before he was able to untangle at all the hurly burly of thoughts which streaked zigzag through his fevered brain. Then two facts detached themselves: he had saved the bank, and he had saved it from Gage. His mind filled with bitter resentment at the fellow. The scoundrel! To knock a man down and—why, it was the worst type of dastardly robbery. It meant a life sentence for the man detected at it. And Gage had done this!

He stumbled up the steps to his home and into bed. He didn't wish to retire, but he remembered that he himself must act cool and calm. It seemed clearly his duty to notify the police at once, but there was no way in which he could explain his knowledge of the facts. He must lie there and toss and wonder what the cashier would now do. In the morning he would go down to the bank as usual, and doubtless receive the report that Gage was missing.

He rose early and seized the morning paper, but a glance at the front page showed him that the crime was still

undetected. He swallowed several cups of coffee and then received a telephone message to come to the bank at once. It sounded like Gage's voice, although he was too nervous to ask or to listen beyond the first sentence. When he reached the bank he forced his way through the crowd which had gathered and entering faced, in the centre of the group about the doctor bent over the watchman, Gage himself. It was Harbin who paled.

"It's all right, Mr. Harbin," said the cashier steadily. "Someone knocked down the watchman and opened the vaults, but there isn't a cent missing. The man must have become frightened and run away. I was the first one here this morning and discovered it and notified the police."

During the ensuing excitement it was Gage who was the man of the hour. It was he who examined the vaults with the chief, he who comforted Garrity, and he who talked with the newspaper men and calmed the excited depositors. And Harbin looked on at it all, too baffled to think. One thing alone he saw, and this crowded from his mind every other detail—Gage wore a new hat.

It was several hours later before the bank settled down to its routine duties and Harbin retired to his private office. His nerves were still in shreds, so that he almost jumped from his chair as the door opened and Gage came in.

"Well," began the cashier uneasily, "everything is running smoothly again, Mr. Harbin."

It was hate that brought the president to himself. He turned swiftly to face the man before him.

"Do you think there is any hope of detecting the thief?" he demanded.

The cashier smiled.

"I don't see that the fellow really is a thief, Mr. Harbin. He didn't get anything, you know."

Harbin's mouth opened with an expletive, but he checked himself. Then he blurted out that which was uppermost in his mind.

"I noticed you wore a new hat this morning, Gage."

The cashier's eyes narrowed.

"You are very observing, Mr. Harbin."

"Perhaps it's fortunate others are not."

The cashier seated himself comfortably in a chair opposite to that of the president. There was a certain rigidity to his pose in spite of its assumed ease.

"Perhaps," he answered, and waited.

Harbin was astounded at the man's nerve—astounded and maddened.

"You—you—"

But the cashier lifted his hand.

"I noticed this morning," he said very deliberately, "I noticed this morning that you were not wearing your watch-fob."

Harbin's hand fell with lightning quickness to his chain. The fob was missing. He caught his breath, turned pale, flushed, and grew ashen.

He did not need to be told where this had been wrenched off; the episode at the vault door flashed upon him in all its details. And, for a wonder, he knew just what to do: he reached in his desk drawer and drew out the old slouch hat. Gage gave a sigh of relief as he felt in his vest-pocket for the fob. Silently the two men exchanged the articles; Gage was the first to recover himself.

"They say," he remarked, "that the bears are gaining strength. I'm glad I didn't have any money to put in at the advice of a friend of mine."

Harbin stared blankly as the cashier arose and tossed the slouch hat into the open fire, where he watched it burn with some interest. Then he turned to leave.

"By the way," said President Harbin hoarsely, "I think that on the first of the year we'll both hand in our resignations."

The cashier paused. He turned his eyes with almost kindly feeling upon the president.

"Yes," he said, "I think you're right, Mr. Harbin."

And going out, he closed the door softly behind him.

DEUX ÉCOLES

Par Michel Provins

M. et Mme Bougarel sont séparés de corps et de biens depuis dix ans, après avoir formé pendant dix autres années le ménage le plus désassorti qui soit. Sur l'instance du mari, la séparation a été convertie en divorce, et chacun des ex-époux a accentué sa vie dans le sens de sa nature, de ses goûts, de ses opinions, de ses tendances sociales: l'ex-Mme Bougarel, née Armande de Gélive, en reprenant le nom aristocratique qu'elle avait toujours regretté, en retournant vivre en province, auprès de sa mère, au château de Rocbare, en y retrouvant la libre pratique de ses habitudes d'étroite dévotion; M. Bougarel, en se livrant à la politique la plus outrancière, allant jusqu'au collectivisme anarchiste, est parti cependant, comme tant d'autres, d'un centre-gauche conjugal. Entre eux deux, ballotté de l'un à l'autre, un fils unique a grandi. Louis a maintenant quinze ans. Selon les dispositions du jugement de divorce, il doit partager ses vacances scolaires entre son père et sa mère: un mois au château de Rocbare, un mois aux Garoux, petit village beauceron où Bougarel a un pied-à-terre électoral.

A Rocbare, les hôtes sont: la douairière de Gélive, Mlle de Courteplinte, chanoinesse, le général et Mme Brosseville, l'abbé Léri-doin, invité pour être quelque peu le précepteur-compagnon de Louis.

Le château: une ancienne bâtisse Louis XIII, avec tour crénelée et vestiges de fossés marécageux où gisent des grenouilles.

Mme de Gélive, qui n'a pas vu son fils depuis un quart d'heure, l'appelle en mère inquiète dont le poussin est égaré.

LOUIS, qui lit tranquillement à l'ombre des tilleuls. — Mais je suis là, maman!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Et l'abbé?

LOUIS. — Vous savez bien que c'est l'heure de son bréviaire... et de sa sieste!

MME DE GÉLIVE, sévèrement. — Louis, tu es inconvenant.

LOUIS. — Quelle inconvenance y a-t-il à constater un fait aussi innocent... et parfaitement exact? Chaque fois que je suis rentré dans la chambre de

l'abbé à cette heure-ci, je l'ai trouvé, avec son livre sur ses genoux, ronflant comme une toupie...

MME DE GÉLIVE. — On n'emploie pas de pareilles expressions en parlant d'un ecclésiastique.

LOUIS. — Mettons qu'il ronflait comme un tuyau d'orgue! Il a bien raison, d'ailleurs, les journées sont assez longues!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Tu t'ennuies avec nous?

LOUIS, affectueux. — Pas avec vous, maman; mais il y a les autres!... Et puis, à mon âge on a besoin de mouvement, de distractions!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Tu as la lecture, la promenade, la pêche dans l'étang du château, la chasse sur nos terres...

LOUIS. — Tout cela avec l'abbé!...

MME DE GÉLIVE. — ...Le soir, le billard ou le whist...

LOUIS, dans ses dents. — ...Avec les vieux parchemins. Le général!... La chanoinesse!... J'aimerais mieux la liberté avec des camarades!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — La vie de dissipation!... Les goûts de ton père!

LOUIS, contracté. — J'ignore si mon père a les goûts que vous dites!... Je ne m'en suis jamais aperçu!... Mais, en tous cas, je ne vois pas grand mal à ce que je demande!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Les mauvaises fréquentations sont toujours funestes. Et les garnements du pays...

LOUIS. — Mais je parlais du jeune Cuvillot et de Pierre Jailloux.

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Justement! le fils d'un fonctionnaire et le neveu d'un député rouge!... C'est du propre!

LOUIS. — Qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait?

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Comment! Ils

ont chassé les religieux, empoisonné l'armée, perdu la France, et ils nous volent...

LOUIS. — Je vous entends bien tous, à chaque instant, répéter cela!... Mais, en admettant, c'est les pères qui sont coupables de tant de vilaines choses, pas les fils!

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — Tels pères, tels fils!... Je ne veux pas que tu voies ces gens-là, qui ne pourraient te donner que de mauvais exemples et de mauvais conseils!... Quand nous trouverons des jeunes gens de ton rang et de ton éducation, des fils de nos amis, bien pensants et bien élevés, ce sera parfait. D'ici là, je tiens à ce que tu ne nous quittes pas. Pendant le peu de temps qu'une loi scélérate et impie te confie à moi, j'ai assez à faire pour te former un bagage moral capable de résister à tout ce que tu entendras et verras chez ton père! Le milieu le plus pernicieux!... (*Apercevant la couverture du livre que tenait Louis.*) Comment! tu lis du Dumas?... (*Indignée.*) *Les Trois Mousquetaires?* Qu'est-ce qui t'a prêté ce livre?

LOUIS. — Un copain de lycée.

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — Les voilà bien les fréquentations du lycée! (*Avec rage.*) Le lycée qu'on m'a imposé pour toi!... (*Montrant un autre livre.*) Et ce volume?... Qu'est-ce que c'est?

LOUIS. — Molière!...

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE, saisissant le livre. — Molière!... (*Feuilletant.*) Molière, non expurgé!... Quelle abomination!... Si c'est possible de gangrener ainsi la jeunesse!

LOUIS. — Il faut bien apprendre les matières de notre programme!

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — Il est joli votre programme!... Le programme de l'instruction laïque et obligatoire! On nous prépare de belles générations! Pauvre pays!... En attendant, je t'interdis, tu m'entends? je t'interdis de lire ces volumes tant que tu seras ici chez moi!... Ce sera autant de sauvé!... (*Grommelant.*) Ah! Dieu!... Molière!... Dumas!... Il ne te manque plus que Musset et M. Zola!... (*Apercevant le jardinier, le père Jean, qui s'approche, la casquette à la*

main, embarrassé.) Qu'est-ce que c'est?

JEAN, humble. — J'aurais voulu parler à Madame... rapport à ma fille... à la Marie-Jeanne.

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — Vous avez des nouvelles?... Elle est plus malade?

JEAN, vague. — Mon Dieu!...

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — Vous avez la figure à l'envers!... Parlez!

JEAN, se décidant. — Eh! ben, voilà!... C'est ma femme qui avait voulu dire à Madame, l'autre mois, qu'on avait envoyé la Marie-Jeanne se faire soigner à la ville... Mais le vrai du vrai... c'est qu'elle n'a pas bougé de chez nous.

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE, durement. — Pourquoi ce mensonge?

JEAN, tortillant sa casquette. — Dame!... C'est qu'il y avait eu une histoire!... Que voulez-vous?... La Marie-Jeanne a vingt ans... c'est une belle fille... avec le cœur un peu vif!... On a beau surveiller les jeunesses, n'est ce pas?... Quand il y a du sentiment dans l'affaire... Enfin, quoi, elle a connu le fils du charron, notre voisin... qui est parti au régiment pour son congé...

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE, à son fils. — Va voir si M. l'abbé a terminé son bréviaire!...

Louis obéit, mais au détour de l'allée, abrité par un massif, il s'arrête et écoute la suite.

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE, sévèrement à Jean. — Et alors?

JEAN. — Alors, ma foi, il est arrivé... ce que Madame peut bien supposer... le p'tiot est venu ce matin.

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE, éclatant. — Qu'est-ce que vous dites!... Votre fille a un enfant?

JEAN. — Un beau poupon!... Falaient bien le prendre!... On pouvait pas le tuer!

MMÉ DE GÉLIVE. — En enfant illégitime!... Chez moi!... Dans ma propriété! C'est monstrueux!

JEAN. — Quand le père reviendra du régiment, on fera le mariage!... Il l'a bien promis... C'est un brave garçon!... D'ici là, ma vieille et moi, nous n'avons pas eu le courage d'être durs avec la Marie-Jeanne. Elle avait tant souffert!

Et le p'tiot était si gentil!... Si Madame voulait le voir?...

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Le voir?... Vous êtes fou!... Un bâtard!... Un... Chez moi... Vous quitterez la maison demain!...

JEAN, *assommé*. — Mais... il y a trente-sept ans que nous sommes au service de la famille!

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Précisément! Vous avez une étrange façon de reconnaître nos bontés!...

JEAN, *navré*. — Nous n'avons rien mis de côté!... et partir dans ce moment... Madame permettra au moins...

MME DE GÉLIVE. — Rien!... Je ne veux pas de ce scandale... J'ai dit que vous partiriez demain!... On vous paiera huit jours.

Elle quitte brusquement l'homme, qui reste sur place, plus hébété encore que révolté, et elle regagne le salon, la conscience claire. Le soir, Louis, qui a été très impressionné par l'incident, entend des bribes de conversations indignées entre sa mère, la douairière, le général, l'abbé et la chanoinesse. Après le dîner, entre le café et la bénédiction, on échange des phrases sentencieuses sur la dissolution des mœurs et la nécessité d'opposer "les exemples énergiques à certaine indulgence qui est la pire des faiblesses."

II

Le mois suivant, chez Bougarel. Maisonnette modeste, à l'orée du village, entre le forgeron et le premier débit de vins. Un dimanche.

BOUGAREL, *appelant son fils de tous les côtés*. — Louis?... Louis?... Où est-il ce bougre-là?... Il n'est pas encore dégrasé des conseils de sa mère!... Je parie qu'il a été à la messe. (*L'apercevant qui rentre*.) D'où viens-tu?

LOUIS, *simplement*. — De faire un tour dans la campagne.

BOUGAREL. — Ah! bon! Ta mère t'a tellement abruti de superstitions, j'avais peur que tu sois chez les curés...

LOUIS. — Vous m'aviez défendu de mettre les pieds à l'église.

BOUGAREL. — Je t'ai déjà dit de me tutoyer! Il n'y a que les fils d'émigrés qui disent *vous* à leurs parents. Tu es

un Bougarel, nom de Dieu!... Un Bougarel comme moi. (*Attirant Louis, un peu effrayé*.) Allons, embrasse-moi!... J'ai une sacrée voix qui te fait peur!... Ce n'est pas ce que je veux!... Nous sommes des camarades!... de bons camarades!... Je voudrais tant te former, je ne dirai pas une âme, parce que nous n'avons pas plus d'âme que le premier des singes, mais une intelligence affranchie de tous les préjugés, de toutes les formules sociales, de toutes les hiérarchies. Tiens!... Tu avais un livre?... Qu'est-ce que c'est?

LOUIS. — Chateaubriand!

BOUGAREL. — Parbleu!... le choix de ta mère!... Un auteur clérical.

LOUIS. — C'est que nous sommes obligés de le connaître. Il est dans le programme.

BOUGAREL. — Ah! oui! ils sont fichus les programmes des lycées! Rien que des livres de calotins ou des histoires qui glorifient les conquérants, les assassins de peuples! Au lieu de l'idée de fraternité internationale, on vous fourre dans le sang le virus de la Patrie! Je suis sûr qu'à Rocbare on t'en a flanqué du culte des ancêtres, des traditions, de la terre de famille?

LOUIS. — Pourtant, chaque année, j'ai une émotion à revenir là-bas, dans toutes choses si lointaines qui, depuis tant de temps, ont été à des grands-pères, des grand-mères, que je n'ai pas connus, mais qu'il me semble que je retrouve. Les pierres des murs, les vieux arbres, les meubles d'autrefois sont comme mes amis, parce qu'ils ont gardé un peu de la vie de ceux à qui ils ont servi — de ceux dont je descends — et j'aime leur pays. Je ne sais pas si c'est tout cela que tu appelles la patrie; mais je ne me sens bien qu'ici, dans cette maison que tu as achetée, ça ne me produit pas le même effet. A l'étranger non plus, la fois que nous y avons été, j'ai éprouvé... comme quand on est chez les autres!

BOUGAREL, *embêté*. — Oui, je ne dis pas!... l'atavisme!... Tu n'es pas responsable de ces idées!... Moi aussi, ça me reprend de temps en temps... et je m'ennuie dans cette baraque, parce que je ne suis pas d'ici. C'est idiot! Voilà

pourquoi il faut former des générations qui se trouveront bien partout!

LOUIS. — Tu crois qu'un Chinois aimerait la Beauce?

BOUGAREL, *geste large*. — Quand le progrès aura tout nivelé!... En attendant, tu vas me changer tes lectures... prendre des penseurs modernes, depuis Jean-Jacques jusqu'à Lassalle, Marx, Blanqui, en passant par des écrivains simplement littéraires, mais qui ont du bon tout de même, comme Zola, par exemple. En poésie, je veux bien encore Musset, quoique ce soit un aristocrate; mais enfin, il avait du tempérament.

LOUIS. — Maman me l'a tant défendu!... Et Zola aussi.

BOUGAREL. — Ta mère est stupide!

LOUIS, *blesé*. — Ah! je ne sais pas ce qu'il y a eu entre elle et toi, mais il ne faut pas dire que maman est stupide! Bien sûr qu'elle me défendait un tas de choses et qu'elle m'obligeait à voir des gens rasoires, mais, après tout, c'est parce qu'elle croyait bien faire... qu'elle avait peur pour moi... (*Emu.*) Elle m'aime bien.

BOUGAREL, *avec élan*. — Mais moi aussi je t'aime bien, sacré gamin! Il n'y a pas deux minutes que je t'embrasais!... Recommencons, ça me fera plaisir! (*Après une franche accolade.*) Tu sais, chacun a ses opinions... Moi aussi, je crois agir pour le mieux. Si tu t'imagines que c'est facile d'élever des hommes!... (*Se secouant.*) Ah! nous avons assez parlé de choses sérieuses! Si tu allais t'amuser avec tes camarades...

LOUIS, *hésitant*. — C'est que...

BOUGAREL. — C'est que quoi?... Le fils du voisin t'attendait tout à l'heure, avec Antoine Potignot.

LOUIS. — Le marchand de vins et le forgeron.

BOUGAREL. — Ils te valent, je suppose!... Qu'est-ce que c'est que ces manières?

LOUIS. — Je ne dis pas!... Je ne suis pas fier... mais tout de même, ils ne sont pas de mon étage.

BOUGAREL. — Comment de ton étage?

LOUIS. — Oui, enfin, je le vois bien à ce qu'ils disent... à ce qu'ils font!...

Ils ne vivent qu'avec des gens plus bas.

BOUGAREL. — Il n'y a pas de bas ni de haut... Tous les hommes sont égaux.

LOUIS. — Tout de même, Pasteur et Potignot!... Bien sûr, c'est pas le même passé, mais Antoine et moi on a d'autres habitudes, d'autres mots, d'autres idées. J'aimerais mieux aller avec Julien Dargènes.

BOUGAREL. — Des bourgeois!... Des capitalistes!... Des exploiters, qui emploient tous les ouvriers du pays dans leurs usines!... Je te défends de les fréquenter... même de leur adresser la parole.

LOUIS. — Pourquoi qu'on nous dit, au lycée, que l'industrie est la richesse de la France.

BOUGAREL. — On vous apprend de jolies choses!... Si tu ne veux pas jouer avec les enfants que je t'indique, reste ici. D'ailleurs, nous allons avoir une visite. Le citoyen Bougrand va venir avec sa femme et son fils passer quelques jours à la maison. Nous avons un congrès à préparer.

LOUIS. — C'est-il vrai ce que j'ai entendu dire à Rocbare qu'ils n'étaient pas mariés? (*Rougeant.*) Que c'était du concubinage?

BOUGAREL. — En voilà des mots!... Oui, ils ne sont pas mariés! Et puis après? Tu t'imagines qu'ils sont de malhonnêtes gens parce qu'ils n'ont pas vu les simagrées d'un maire ou d'un curé!

LOUIS. — Puisque c'est la loi, le maire?... Et qu'elle est pour tout le monde?... Et puis alors, le fils? Il est naturel?

BOUGAREL. — Eh bien! ce n'est pas un mouton à cinq pattes, parce que naturel? Tu n'es pas artificiel, que je sache? Bougrand, au contraire, a très noblement agi! Il a tenu à partager sa vie avec la mère de son enfant plutôt que de les abandonner, sans ressources...

LOUIS, *touché*. — Oui, ça c'est très-bien!... J'ai vu, en effet, une histoire où on avait jeté à la porte une malheureuse qui avait un enfant. On disait que c'était un crime, et qu'il fallait qu'ils soient punis tous les deux...

BOUGAREL, *indigné*. — ...En mou-

rant de faim?... Où as-tu vu cette infamie?

LOUIS, *vivement*. — J'ai lu dans un livre... Je ne sais plus... Il y a longtemps...

Au lycée, après la rentrée.

UN CAMARADE *s'approche de Louis, qui, assis à l'écart, la tête dans ses mains, semble réfléchir profondément*. — Qu'est-

ce que t'as?... Tu regrettes les vacances?

LOUIS, *laconique*. — Non.

LE CAMARADE. — Tu piques la mélancolie?

LOUIS. — Non plus.

LE CAMARADE. — Alors, quoi?

LOUIS. — Quoi?... Eh bien! je songe... Je cherche à me former une opinion sur la morale, la religion et la politique!...



IN AUTUMN RAIN

By Martha Gilbert Dickinson Bianchi

WHAT spirit is it calling in the Autumn rain,
That bids me cast my needle by, set wide the door?
The day is troubled with its voice and on the path
The footfall of the dead that come no more.

To reminiscent languors now the gardens yield,
In Spring they ardent press—in Fall resigned they know
They have fulfilled the fate of Summer—now to sleep
Beneath the lullaby of winds that strow
The drifting yellow leaves from unresisting trees,
To weave in mellow strands along the lane and street
Vague Moorish patterns of forgotten suns and rains,
A golden tapestry for Autumn's feet.

Well hath the Spring a throbbing fever of her own,
Waking and breaking from reluctant thralls in vain,
Since all her prophecy at last is lulled to peace
In Nature's sure narcotic, Autumn rain.
O guest beloved of my heart and wailing wind,
For you I light the hearth, entreat your will its way,
Pile high the cones and hesitate—perchance
That haunting spirit o'er my sill should stray!

Let us elude tonight the intervening drear,
While in the leaping flame hope's drooping pinions thrill,
Until as Southing birds we cry, "'Tis but a sleep,
Ere April call us by the daffodil!"

THE PIECE THAT PASSETH UNDERSTANDING

By Channing Pollock

WHICH I wish to remark—and my language is plain—that for ways that are dark and for tricks that are vain the writer of symbolic drama is peculiar—which the same I would rise to explain.

Henrik Ibsen was his name, and I shall not deny in regard to the same what that name might imply, but his "The Master Builder," acted by Alla Nazimova at the Bijou Theatre, proved an intellectual maze to the most learned, and persons who take exception to this statement I defy.

We had a terribly strenuous Autumn—we who go regularly to the play—with autobiographic symbolism and modern moralities and no fewer than two ultra-serious dramatists elevating the stage to an altitude fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. Throughout an age in which it has been universally agreed that the loftiest purpose of the theatre is identical with the mission of the circus clown, I have gone on insisting that the true aim of the dramatist must always be the stimulation of thought. Therefore, I preface this review of "The Master Builder" and "The Struggle Everlasting" by submitting that there is a wide difference between thoughtfulness and perplexity, and that great truths locked up in opaque verbiage are likely to be of about as much use to the public as great fortunes locked up in bank vaults.

Joe Miller never invented a more nearly unanswerable conundrum than "Why is the symbolic drama?" The best explanation possible is that which Sam Bernard used to give Hattie Williams in "The Girl from Kay's."

"What is it," Mr. Bernard had inquired, "that has feathers, stands on one leg, and barks like a dog?" The correct answer proved to be "a stork." "Ah," observed Miss Williams, "but a stork doesn't bark like a dog." "I know," returned Mr. Bernard; "I just put that in to make it more difficult." You may believe me, gentle reader; the symbol is written into the drama for that reason, and no other.

If you want to tell your neighbor that his wife is ill you go to him and say: "Jones, your wife is ill." It would never occur to you to substitute the intelligence that his barn was afire. Had you done so you might be sure that, when Jones rushed home and found that he required a physician and not a hose-cart, he couldn't have been quieted by the explanation that you intended the barn to be a symbol of Mrs. Jones. The same common sense should be applied to communications made through the medium of the theatre. If a playwright has anything to say, the best thing for him to do is to say it, and to say it as plainly and as clearly as possible. The spectacle of a man being ruined by drink surely conveys a more powerful lesson, and makes a more direct appeal, than a story about a little girl, temporarily the symbol of manhood, being devoured by a tigress which you are expected to discover is intended to stand for drunkenness. "Uncle Tom's Cabin," primary in its simplicity, did more toward the abolition of slavery than all the symbolic dramas ever written have done or will do toward the establishment or erasure of any right or wrong.

Had I less care for my self-respect

than for your opinion of me, I might impress you deeply through my account of "The Master Builder." Genius may be "an infinite capacity for taking pains," but it is equally an infinite capacity for taking credit, and the essayist most sure of admiration is he who seems to know most of what other people know least. If you had seen Ibsen's mad play, without comprehending a word of it, and were then to peruse a lengthy elucidation of the work from my typewriter, you would be certain to feel that I digest such things better than you do. I don't. That particular play will always seem to me the piece that passeth understanding. I've read "The Master Builder," and William Archer's comment on "The Master Builder," and dozens of comments on William Archer's comment on "The Master Builder," and I've witnessed the Florence Kahn and the Alla Nazimova performances of "The Master Builder," but I hope to die if at this moment I have the faintest notion what the play is about. I don't think Ibsen ever had, either.

Certainly comprehension of the tragedy never made itself manifest in audiences at the Bijou. Many people in the gathering of which I was a part evidently fancied themselves at a farce, and seized greedily at opportunities to snigger a little. They reminded me of the vaudeville patrons who used to sit through Arnold Daly's presentation of the Bernard Shaw comedy, "How He Lied to Her Husband," waiting dumfoundedly for something they could get through their heads, until Mr. Daly took his regular prescribed tumble to the floor, when the spectators, treated at last to an example of the humor to which they were accustomed, laughed uproariously. The folk at the Bijou sometimes laughed out loud, and, I am inclined to believe, generally in the wrong place, but of this I cannot be positive.

Whatever curiosity you may feel regarding the plot of "The Master Builder" you must attempt to satisfy through the published edition of the play, which you can get for one dollar,

with Mr. Archer's comment and "Hedda Gabler" thrown in. I can only tell you that the titular personage is Halvard Solness, who got his start as an architect by the burning of the house in which he lived with Mrs. Solness. This conflagration rests heavily on Halvard's conscience, because, long before the blaze, he knew of a crack in a chimney which might have started the fire. "Did it?" asks Hilda Wangel. "No," answers Solness. "It has been clearly ascertained that the fire broke out in a clothes cupboard in a totally different part of the house." F. Anstey in his clever burlesque of "The Master Builder," printed in "Mr. Punch's Pocket Ibsen," correctly describes Hilda as a "perambulating Allegory without a portmanteau." She says Halvard kissed her ten years before the beginning of the drama, when she was a child of thirteen, and, though the builder has forgotten it, she makes that an excuse to reside with him, board and lodging free, for the rest of her existence. Mrs. Solness goes shopping for her, and buys her all sorts of things, out of an idea of "duty" and a quite modern affection for her husband's "soul affinity." Mr. Archer hints that Halvard was mad, and long association with Mrs. Solness might have set the sanest man on earth to sucking his thumbs in a padded cell. Mrs. Solness, whose first name is Aline, has moped for twelve years, and continues to mope three acts longer, because her children have both died shortly after the fire, though, toward the end of the piece, she admits that she has not grieved for these little ones as much as for "nine lovely dolls." "And they were burnt, too?" inquires Hilda. "All of them," replies Mrs. Solness. "Oh, it was hard—so hard for me." Hilda really comforts Halvard a good deal, but she has a gentle desire to see him on top of a high scaffolding, though the poor chap frankly admits that high places invariably make him giddy, and she persists in urging her wishes, until the builder climbs up a few hundred feet, falls to the ground, and is squashed.

These extracts from the play are amusing in condensed form, but even a sense of humor doesn't help if you are a little sleepy when you go to "The Master Builder." It is *such* an advantage to know what a play is about. Mr. Archer says: "That the tragedy is full of symbolism it would be futile to deny; and the symbolism is mainly autobiographic." He adds—romantic truth—that Ibsen undoubtedly got some of his ideas from a lady named Emilie Bardach, whom he met at Gosensass. A very learned woman confided in me that Hilda stood for those lofty impulses which sometimes lead a man to ruin, while Aline was the safe and sane conservatism which kept him to earth. Another woman of my acquaintance thought Halvard typified mankind, with the burned house as early ambition, Aline as conscience, and Hilda as the world, the flesh and the devil. I unbent so far as to admit that Hilda certainly was the devil. These are widely different interpretations of symbols, but then, as Mr. Anstey says, "cymbals were meant to clash." "What do you make of 'The Master Builder'?" I asked the brightest critic in New York. He replied: "That depends on the day I happen to read it."

My own opinion is that Ibsen wrote this play under the same circumstances which caused Charles Hoyt to write "A Dog in the Manger." In other words, I am inclined to think that the chimney was not the only thing cracked about "The Master Builder."

Alla Nazimova, who converted our reviewers to the doctrine of "Alla be praised," is clever, but far from greatness. That she has been called great is due to the fact that the "made in Germany" label is worth as much on a player as on a toy locomotive. Every now and again an exotic actress, whose charm is in her manner and her posings, enjoys a short, sharp vogue on our stage and is gone. Florence Kahn was such a one. New York went wild over her about the time she appeared in "The Master Builder" at Carnegie Lyceum. Who remembers her today?

To parody at the expense of grammar, where are the pose of yesteryear? Madame Nazimova's Hilda is temperamental, kittenish and, to the minds of many, delightfully bewitching. I dare say her performance could not be surpassed in America. Walter Hampden struggled hard with Halvard Solness, and almost succeeded in making him intelligible. Mr. Hampden has great virility, and much may be expected of his work in the future. Gertrude Berkeley, as the wife; H. Reeves-Smith, as a physician, and Rosalind Ivan, as a bookkeeper in love with Halvard, are particularly praiseworthy in a cast of rather remarkable merit.

Whatever else may be said of Edwin Milton Royle's "The Struggle Everlasting," presented by a company including Florence Roberts and Arthur Byron at the Hackett Theatre, the piece was perfectly clear. It also proved to be so interesting that one regretted Mr. Royle's having fallen victim to the hidden-meaning epidemic. The substratum of allegory in "The Struggle Everlasting" told nothing new, gave evidence of no deep thought, and frequently drifted into mixed metaphor, while the obvious, surface story had real dramatic value. My humble advice to earnest Mr. Royle is to call his work "a play" instead of "a modern morality"; christen his principal characters Bessie Brown instead of Body, and John Smith instead of Mind, and reap the financial harvest due him from a play much like and quite equal to "The Christian."

"The Struggle Everlasting" begins in a dense forest, where Mind has fled from the hypocrisy of the world, followed by his (or its) mother and a baby brother named Soul. The Mother begs him (or it) to return, but Mind, having been fascinated by Body, in the person of a woodland sprite, retires to a cave to choose between love and duty. Body kills the Mother, and Mind, returning, declares that her blood must stand between them forever. In the next act we find Mind at a university, where the graduation exercises are be-

ing followed by much revelry. Body appears in the form of a servant whom Mind has seduced, and Soul, still an infant, is left on a table to be adopted by the college fraternity. The next act, which is far the best, occurs in the beautiful rooms of Body, who has become a famous demi-mondaine. Mind is there studying her, and a succession of men ruined by her drift through, each stopping for a bit of fine character acting. There are a pugilist who has just been whipped by a "second-rater" and who is turned away after his defeat; a puny prince; an actor who has lost his memory; and a banker, already a financial wreck, whose wife comes to beg that he will leave the scarlet woman. Body has become enamoured of Soul, now grown up and a preacher, and in the last act kills herself at realizing the impossibility of any other redemption. She dies with a copy of Holy Writ in one hand and a powder-puff in the other.

It seems probable that Mr. Royle had opportunity to learn more about his symbols in the two years he worked on the play than I in a single evening at the Hackett, but "The Struggle Everlasting" must stand or fall through the judgment of people acquainted with the subject only a few hours, and so I venture to say that the allegory often appears to be hopelessly mixed. "The Struggle Everlasting" is surely a misnomer so far as it concerns Body and Mind, who are opposed very seldom, but, generally speaking, form an alliance in favor of evil. Mind watches indifferently over the orgy to which come the prince, the pugilist and the actor, and Mind actually tries to thrust Body back into debauchery, personified by the Banker, when she really craves for Soul. Mind bids Soul quit Body in her hour of trial, and it is Body, not Mind, which grows to care most for Soul. Body, too, seems the reasoning factor in the story, betraying much keener intelligence than does Mind. In small matters Mr. Royle gets one hopelessly confused, as when Mind advises Soul to leave Body to conscience. What is Mr. Royle's conception of

conscience? Does he believe it to be purely physical? Otherwise, how can Body, without Mind or Soul, feel conscience? These are a few—only a few—of the points on which the author does not succeed in making himself quite plain.

C. M. S. McLellan, who wrote "Leah Kleschna," produced a much more lucid allegory some years ago in "The Jury of Fate," which was acted by Lawrence Irving at the Waldorf Theatre, London. The piece was a failure, and it seems unlikely that any other play of the same type can succeed. "Everyman," the prototype of both efforts, won attention only as a curiosity. Morality plays belong to another age and another state of mentality; they were for the improvement of intellectual children who could not deduce from life, but were compelled to have their deductions made for them. Broadway is to be absorbed in human beings and in every-day existence; not in—"a perambulating Allegory without a portmanteau." During the death-scene of Body, which would have been most pitiful had the lady been named Brown, even the women in the house were millions of miles from sympathetic interest. "Oh, what a gorgeous *négligée*!" they were whispering. "Oh, isn't she beautiful!"

Florence Roberts was just that—and wonderfully capable, to boot. She is an actress of unlimited experience and temperament, whose method suggests that of Mrs. Fiske without being in any sense a copy. Of her performance it may be said that she quite justified the enthusiasm which she created last year when she acted here in "The Strength of the Weak." The supporting cast was the most consistently excellent we have had during the present season in New York, every "bit" being given with authority and significance. Arthur Byron, than whom we can boast few better actors, was capital in the rôle of Mind, as was De Witt Jennings in the part of Soul. Robert Peyton Carter, Franklin Roberts, Joseph Adelman, Edwin Holt and Mrs. Royle deserve the best

that can be penned or thought of their interpretations. The production, as to scenery and investiture, was well up to the high standard of the producer, Henry B. Harris.

It is a serious thing for a dramatist to begin taking himself seriously. Charles Klein, who made a lot of money by writing a play called "The Lion and the Mouse," which gratified the primitive desire to see the weak succeed against the strong, immediately heard a call to settle the differences of society, and came a terrible cropper with a platitudinous dissertation entitled, "The Daughters of Men." We have observed how the author of "The Squaw Man" failed when he tried his hand at symbolism and "The Struggle Everlasting." Now we shall note what happened to Jones, as Frederic Edward Mackay observed in the *Evening Mail*, when he took to sermonizing and produced "The Evangelist."

In an encyclopedia of the drama the history of this effort may be written as follows: "The Evangelist." Originally christened 'The Galilean's Victory.' Child of Henry Arthur Jones. Born September 30, 1907, at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York. Died October 18, 1907, of failure of the box-office receipts." The piece was a lengthy presentation of the evils of churchmanship; a wordy discourse upon such absorbing problems as the question whether it is right to make converts by showing living pictures; a few drops of play in a whole evening of water. It contained about as much action as Mr. Jones's other notable work, "The Renascence of the English Drama," and was inferior to that work in that, while "The Renascence of the English Drama" preached what was new and debatable and interesting, "The Evangelist" preached what was old and obvious and unimportant. The unpardonable sin in the theatre is to be dull, and this sin Mr. Jones committed—with malice of forethought at the Knickerbocker.

What little story the piece had to tell concerned a lady named Christabel Nuneham, wife of Philip Nuneham,

mineralogist and chemist, who, for some reason not clearly defined, chose to carry on an illicit love affair with Rex Allen, M.D. Her husband and his father, Sir James Nuneham, had been having trouble with their workmen, and imported an exhorter, Sylvanus Rebbings, to convert these laborers to belief in the ten commandments and—presumably—the twelve-hour day. Sylvanus had seen Mrs. Nuneham in Southampton, whither she had gone with Allen, and was not disposed to conceal the fact. Cross-examined, however, by the husband, who evidently knew more about minerals than about manliness, since he was willing to accuse his wife in the presence of a third person, Rebbings followed the precedent of a certain reigning monarch and "lied like a gentleman." This scene, the only strong one in the drama, began by suggesting "Mrs. Dane's Defence" and ended by being that ancient work which, because of its frequent performances, a friend of mine calls "The Too OFTENS." Of course, you remember the "My first lie" episode in that wonderful old play by d'Ennery. Afterward, Mrs. Nuneham, moved to emotional hysteria by hearing Sylvanus say "Come to Christ," confessed the whole truth, and broke up the family.

The real purpose of the offering seemed to be the arraignment of smug creedism—an arraignment rendered unnecessary by the fact that smug creedism long ago arraigned itself. There were four clergymen in the cast, and they discussed religious matters so constantly that the viciousness of drunken, Dickensonian Ben Possiter and the sallies of agnostic, epigrammatic Richard Fyson were a delightful relief. Fyson, who had no faith in anything, and who did right simply for right's sake, was by so far the finest character in the whole mess of canting, self-satisfied preachers and laymen that he quite defeated the propagandic intentions of Mr. Jones.

There is nothing to be gained in mentioning the acting of "The Evangelist," since it isn't acted any more.

Charles Fulton, an Englishman, gave the one really remarkable performance in the play, his Pyson being splendidly clear-cut and emphatic. I single out Mr. Fulton for mention because everyone who has any influence should do whatever can be done to keep him in this country. We need him.

Following the trio of productions just reviewed, one or two operatic pieces of more than ordinary merit came like "antidotes of medicated music." Lew Fields's new vehicle, "The Girl Behind the Counter," created the same furor at the Herald Square that "The Red Mill" did last year at the Knickerbocker, and is the best thing of its kind we have had on Broadway since Fritz Scheff brought in "Mlle. Modiste." "The Girl Behind the Counter" is nonsense pure and simple, but it has better rhyme and reason, more wit and less horseplay, than any other musical comedy of the season.

This entertainment was written by Leedham Bantock, Arthur Anderson and Howard Talbot, and entirely rewritten by Edgar Smith. The piece opens in "an American department-store in London," where there is much excellent satire at the expense of uncivil clerks, and a sufficient number of pretty girls to convert all masculinity from its prejudice against shopping. Henry Schniff, "a soldier of misfortune," who has married his landlady in lieu of paying his board one day, and the next has found himself heir to a large fortune, comes there, and is mistaken for a detective. From that moment the fun of the play is constant and irresistible. "Where is Mrs. Schniff's first husband?" someone asks her second. "I don't know," replies that unfortunate, "but, wherever he is, he's got the laugh on me!" Henry Schniff's adventures at a soda-fountain, with his wife, in the guise of a waiter, and under other circumstances, keep the audience rocking with mirth through as rapid, as brilliant and as exhilarating a combination of melody and foolery as could be imagined.

Much of the music in this perform-

ance is jingly and tuneful, and the stage is occupied constantly by dancing girls and show girls in glorious frocks. Mr. Fields displays unsuspected ability as a legitimate comedian, creating merriment by methods that would pass muster on the dramatic stage. Connie Ediss was so advertised before her appearance that her work as Mrs. Schniff proved a little disappointing, though not sufficiently so to be detrimental. Louise Dresser, a divinated May Irwin, sings a "coon song" delightfully and looks ravishing. Her pronunciation is in need of correction—"puffumery" is what Miss Dresser calls perfumery—but her appearance is a joy forever. The same thing may be said of Lotta Faust in a dress that recalls the costume of Gunga Din:

"The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before
An' rather less than arf o' that behind."

George Beban, Ignacio Martinetti, and other competent people lend distinction and personality to an entertainment guaranteed to restore to sanity a mind unbalanced by "The Master Builder" and to thoroughly dry spirits dampened at a presentation of "The Evangelist."

The difference between "The Gay White Way," exquisitely done by the Shuberts at the Casino, and "The Girl Behind the Counter" ought to convince even a manager that, after all, the author is rather an important factor in the business of the theatre, and that the most marvelous production, without a play inside of it, is only a scarecrow in evening dress.

"The Gay White Way" has a long cast of celebrities, beautiful women, gorgeous gowns, splendid scenery, endless life and motion—everything in the world but music, a book and some lyrics. In lieu of present performance, the clever people in the company offer scraps of their past achievements, until the attraction at the Casino resembles nothing else so much as a graveyard of dead and gone successes, with the ghosts making merry until midnight. Throughout, Broadway favor-

ites are introduced by scraps of the songs in which they made previous hits.

The theme of the piece itself is the theme of "The Passing Show." (Casino—1894.) Frank Doane sings "It's a Different Girl Again." (Pavilion Music Hall, London—1906.) Blanche Ring does her excellent imitation of Margaret Anglin. (Herald Square—1906.) Melville Ellis is heard in his pleasant "pianologue." (Vaudeville—1905.) Alexander Carr shows his justly celebrated imitation of David Warfield. (Circle—1906.) Those who do not revive pristine triumphs come as near to it as possible. Maude Raymond has a ditty, "Somebody's Been 'Round Here," that is own first cousin to "Bill Simmons." Miss Ring's "My Irish Gibson Girl" is practically "My Irish Molly, O!" Jefferson de Angelis's detective whose disguises everyone penetrates was used by James T. Powers in "The Blue Moon." For a time I wondered why Sydney Rosenfeld and Ludwig Engländer called their work "The Gay White Way" instead of employing the generally known appellation, The Great White Way. Now I understand. They *had* to have something original in the piece as an excuse for drawing royalties.

The plan of the performance is one that should have suggested endless fun. Prominent persons from various plays are supposed to be mixed up together, clashing their characteristics and evolving travesty therefrom. Mr. Rosenfeld does nothing worthy with the idea, which dissipates itself in noise and is utterly forgotten when the curtain falls on the second act of his piece—and a selection from "The Orchid." It seems a real pity that artists of the caliber of Mr. de Angelis and Miss Ring should be wandering about the stage with nothing to do that begins to be worthy of their talents. "The Gay White Way" is much noisier than it is gay, and much bluer than it is white. It is a treat to the eye, an insult to the ear, and an ideal performance for a deaf and dumb asylum.

Joe Weber's Music Hall—they call it a theatre now, but it isn't—may be set

down as the one house in town that has kept its character and the character of its audiences through all changes. Respectability and French gilt have spread themselves over the Casino, where first-night audiences used to walk out of "Who's Who," and where formerly at an opening no one felt at home who could not have shown as passport a copy of that morning's newspaper with his or her name in the headlines. Joe Weber's first-nighters are still the famous and the notorious; men of the whole world, women of the half world. From a bird's-eye view the congregation which witnessed the initial performance of this season's annual production, "Hip! Hip! Hooray!" must have resembled the field of the cloth of gold. Someone in my rear hazarded the opinion that the audience did not include a hundred women who had not changed their hair and their husbands within the year.

"Hip! Hip! Hooray!" is not up to the standard of productions at Joe Weber's. It contains the usual amount of nonsense without the usual amount of humor, and the big individualities that used to distinguish performances on Twenty-ninth street are conspicuous by reason of their absence. Perhaps we audiences are growing older and harder to please, but mixed conversation of the dialect kind no longer seems sufficiently entertaining to be the *raison d'être* of a musical comedy. Mr. Weber and Dick Bernard have an amusing dialogue, concerning a breakfast food which they propose to call Excited Oats, but that is the one really laughable bit in the presentation. "Is it good?" Mr. Weber asks concerning the breakfast food. "Is it good?" repeats Mr. Bernard. "Well, if you cover it with sugar and cream and put a few strawberries on top, you can eat Excited Oats and hardly notice it!"

The feature that comes nearest to lifting "Hip! Hip! Hooray!" from mediocrity is the by-play devised by Stage Manager Julian Mitchell. The ensembles are beautifully arranged

throughout, and nothing could be daintier or prettier than the business accompanying a ballad called "All I Want in the Wide, Wide World Is You, Just You." Gus Edwards's music, with the exception of one or two melodies, is colorless and commonplace, while Edgar Smith's book seems flat and vapid, especially when contrasted with his brilliant work in "The Girl Behind the Counter." "Hip! Hip! Hooray!" purports to deal with college life, its first act centring about a much-used fence on the campus and its second in the boat-house. Mr. Weber is the visiting uncle of one of the boys, and the others in the company are seen as students and as show girls belonging to a stranded musical comedy.

"Lola from Berlin," by John J. McNally, with lyrics and music by William Jerome and Jean Schwartz, served to reintroduce Lulu Glaser to Broadway at the Liberty. The piece is a rather vacuous combination of obvious melodrama and slap-stick farce, interrupted occasionally and to advantage by song numbers. An unfortunate fact, and, at the same time, an indication of the quality of the play, is that, though I saw it only a fortnight ago, at the time of writing I cannot recall the story or any single incident therefrom. One lyric, "I'd Rather Be a Has-Been Than a Never-Was-at-All," merits great praise, as does its singer, Augustus Herz, whose rendering of the verses

strongly recalls Albert Chevalier. Miss Glaser looks very charming and acts with her usual freshness and spontaneity. I recollect that "Lola" did not bore me terribly, but that, on the other hand, it gave me not one moment of positive enjoyment.

The same thing may be said truthfully of "The Hurdy-Gurdy Girl," though that piece had one very pretty air, "Come, Little Dearie," and a most amusing comic song entitled, "Stories." "The Hurdy-Gurdy Girl"—New York called it "The Hoidy-Goidy Gail"—was written by Richard Carle, and simultaneously gave up the ghost and the stage of Wallack's Theatre three or four weeks after its production. The performance was notable because of the vigorous appearance of old Annie Yeamans, a clever characterization by Jacques Kruger, and the refreshing sweetness, cleanness and simplicity of a little woman named Adele Rowland.

David Kessler, who had been playing in Yiddish on the East Side, came to Broadway for a time in a drama cyclept "The Spell." Afterward he went back to the East Side. James O'Neill, a very fine actor indeed, was seen at the Lyric in revivals of "Virgilius" and "Monte Cristo." Both pieces are anachronisms, and if there was any good reason for collecting their dried bones to rattle on Broadway that reason is locked in the bosom of Mr. O'Neill.



THE WORLD BUILDERS

By Grace MacGowan Cooke

CHOOSE ye, O world builders, what will ye build?
Makers of destiny, where will ye dwell?
Of one earth is life's vessel molded and filled—
The saint builds his heaven, the damned build their hell.

THE IMMOLATION OF KEITH

By Louise Wintzer

KEITH met her the same day, but from the first he knew there was no chance for him. She was one of those tall, slender American girls, almost a type, with fluffy, light brown hair, dark-fringed, gray-blue eyes, a small, straight nose and a sensitive, mobile mouth. Her skin was of a smooth, fine texture and the red mounted easily to her cheeks. Keith saw the signal of embarrassment flying that first afternoon, and he knew Fancy wasn't wasting any time. Not that Fancy ever did waste time—it wasn't his way. He was handsome and he stood six foot in his slippers; he was broad-shouldered, slim-waisted, and in his uniform most women turned in his direction when he passed by. His sponsors in baptism had christened him Francis, but from his Annapolis days he had been known as "Fancy" Burdette, and men and women alike used his nickname.

The U. S. S. *Arrow*, which Keith commanded, put into Bar Harbor for a few days, with the rest of the fleet. The *Arrow* was the tail of the kite, a converted yacht, and most people would have overlooked Lieutenant-Commander Keith had he not been accompanied by the very good-looking Lieutenant Burdette. It was owing to Fancy's good looks that the two men found themselves the day of their arrival at a charity garden fête organized by the ladies of the Malvern, and there Keith ran across an old friend who promptly introduced them to the prettiest girl in Maine, as he termed Agnes Hart.

Keith would have widened the distinction, and Fancy, throwing the

ardor of twenty-eight into his soulful brown eyes, calmly walked off with her while Keith was racking his brains to think up something appropriate to say. Later she presented them both to her mother and that lady asked them to call.

They followed up the advantage the next afternoon, and Keith discovered that he was supposed to entertain Mrs. Hart while Fancy inspected the garden under her daughter's supervision. And for the five days that they remained at Bar Harbor the programme was the same. Mrs. Hart, who looked absurdly young to have a grown daughter, fell to Keith's share, while Fancy sat beside Agnes during their motor rides and at luncheon on board the *Arrow*, was her partner at golf and tennis and took her in to dinner the last night of their stay, when Mrs. Hart invited some of her friends to meet the two officers as a return for their hospitality. Afterward they played bridge—at least Keith played at one of the two tables gotten up, but Fancy unblushingly averred that he knew nothing of the game, although on board the *Arrow* he and Keith played nightly for a cent a point, with a set of wooden dummies.

Of course Miss Hart did not play either, and Keith's envious eyes followed the couple as they disappeared through the French window and were lost in the shadows of the vine-clad piazza.

Fancy was strangely silent as they took their way back to the ship. As a rule he was loquacious to a degree, but tonight he appeared to be thinking deeply. He had the night watch, and he changed and came up on deck to

find Keith in the chart-house, apparently studying the course for the following day.

Fancy merely nodded and would have gone on, but Keith called him back.

"It's none of my business, but I've noticed a few things. Is she to be merely another?" he demanded. His thin brown face looked wan in the moonlight, and his light eyes were as cold as steel.

Fancy scowled. "What do you mean by another?" he retorted.

"You know well enough. The Atlantic Coast is strewn with wrecks of your making; you break them all up, then you leave them, derelicts. What are you going to do about this one? She's the kind that will take things hard."

Fancy plunged his hands deep in his pockets. "If I deserved the reputation you've just given me, I'd throw myself overboard! I confess I've flirted a little—what man hasn't? In this case I'm serious. If you hadn't always been a sort of father confessor, I'd tell you the affair was none of your damned business. As it is, I'll own up. I'm in love! Never knew I could get it so bad, and if she'll only have me I'll be the happiest youngster in the service."

"You haven't asked her, then?"

"I asked her tonight. We who are here today and gone tomorrow can't afford to waste any time, but she wants six months to make up her mind."

"Wants to test the strength and endurance of your affection?"

"Something like that."

"Well, you'll keep straight, for she's not to have her heart broken. I'll help you."

Fancy laughed, but he appreciated what Keith meant when he found his shore leave peremptorily curtailed. Hitherto Keith had never seemed to care how much of Burdette's duty he took over, but now he kept his junior on board as much as possible. There were no dances to which Keith did not announce his intention of going, no tea-parties at which he did not appear, and he suddenly found it imperative

that either he or Fancy should be on board. Only once did his vigilance relax, and that was when Agnes Hart came to visit some friends at New London. Then Keith made the way smooth for the lovers and gave them every opportunity of being together.

One day Agnes came up shyly and held out her hand.

"Francis has told me you know. Will you answer a question honestly? Do you think I'm the sort of girl to make him happy?"

She raised her earnest gray-blue eyes to his, and Keith found himself stammering and flushing under their potent gaze.

"You'd make any man happy," he blurted out; "that isn't the question, but will you be content to see so little of him? A Navy man's wife has many, many lonely days."

"I didn't think you'd put me off like this," she reproved. Then she changed the subject.

Keith's heart was torn with agony, but he registered a vow that if ever he could do aught to ensure her peace of mind he would, no matter what the cost to him or to Fancy.

There was no reason to delay. Fancy had a small income inherited from an uncle, besides his pay, and Agnes had a generous dress allowance which her parents were willing to continue. They were married within the year.

Fancy had shore duty at one of the big yards, but Keith went to the Pacific Coast. He told himself it would be easier that way.

Neither Fancy nor Agnes guessed the real state of Keith's feelings, and he smiled grimly when his friend wished he would find happiness in the same way soon.

When an incipient revolution broke out in Cuba some three years later Keith and Burdette found themselves on board the same ship, which had been hastily manned and sent to keep the peace in the island.

Agnes Burdette came as far as Hampton Roads with her husband, and Keith, looking into her face, saw

that the three years had not been untroubled ones. He had a few moments' conversation with her alone.

"You'll look out for Francis, won't you? Somehow I feel relieved to think that you two are to be shipmates again," she said simply.

"I'll look out for him so far as one man can for another; but don't worry, Mrs. Burdette, this won't be a real war, and we shall not be in any real danger." He tried to reassure her.

"It isn't physical danger I fear for him—you know that, Mr. Keith. It's—oh, don't make me say it. You know Fancy!"

She broke off abruptly, and Keith noticed that for the first time she used the nickname which so clearly indicated the volatile character of her husband.

Keith's face was very grave. "I repeat, you must not worry. Each man has to work out his own salvation, but Burdette's safeguard lies in your love for him."

"You do not say his love for me."

"No, I am taking that for granted. I've known him for ten years now, and I think I'm safe in assuming that to be a fact." He lied like an officer and a gentleman, for in his heart he had little faith in the stability of Fancy Burdette's affections.

But his calm statement relieved the soreness of Agnes's heart and she thanked him with an eloquent glance, so that he felt well repaid for the outrage he had done to his conscience.

As of old, Fancy dropped into the habit of spending his off hours in Keith's room, and sitting upon the bunk, a cigarette between his lips and a glass conveniently near his elbow, he talked in the old fascinating strain that had always charmed the taciturn Keith. And the things he told his superior officer were not always to his credit. Yet when on rare occasions he mentioned his wife it was with a certain tenderness that made Keith hope in the end he would come to a realization of the truth and learn to appreciate the woman he had married. Perhaps, after all, he had hit upon the

true solution, and her love would safeguard Fancy through the dangers that were bound to beset a man of his personal attractions. He was heavier than he had been three years ago, and the contour of his face had hardened, and there were deep creases around his mouth which should not have been there. Yet there was no gainsaying that his good looks were as pronounced as ever and his ability to appeal to women was accentuated, not diminished, by the slight indications of dissipation that marred his appearance for the two who cared, his wife and his friend.

When they reached Cuba they were sent to the Western Coast and were ordered to anchor off Jucaro, a small seaport town in the Santa Clara district where the revolution had been hatched. Jucaro was possessed of few attractions. It had a dreary stretch of sandy beach, the town was poor and the inhabitants belonged mostly to the fishermen class. A company of United States Infantry was stationed there, and the officers of the Army and Navy fraternized immediately. For several months the game dragged along, until the officers on board the U. S. S. *Leopard* began to chafe under the strain. They went once to Santiago around Christmas-time to give the men shore liberty; then they were ordered back to their post.

Agnes wanted to come out to Jucaro, but Fancy discouraged her and even Keith, to whom she wrote timidly, answered that it was no place for an American woman, and moreover no one could tell how long they were to remain there.

In the public square was a statue of the great Martí, the martyred apostle of Cuba's liberties, put up by donations, and it was to be unveiled on the twenty-fourth of February, a day sacred to Cubans as the anniversary of their successful uprising against Spain.

Captain Howard, in command of the post, learned that the natives were preparing to come into Jucaro in great numbers for the unveiling, and that it would be a day of patriotic speeches

and undoubtedly of political disturbances.

"I don't like it, Keith," he confided, over the coffee; "and yet I can't forbid the celebration. Our people don't seem to understand that trouble can be brought about very easily. Here I am with only a hundred men, and you've two hundred and fifty aboard ship, but as far as I can learn Colonel Juan Antonio is massing the veterans of the six weeks' revolution and they will march into Jucaro on the morning of the twenty-fourth, two thousand strong. Not that I doubt for one minute if it comes to a scrap that one American is not equal to ten Cubanos, but my orders are to avoid a scrap, and the only way to hold these people in check is to overawe them by a display of superior numbers. They're regular fire-eaters and they're itching to try conclusions with us. Have you ever seen this Juan Antonio? He's three-quarters African and I suspect one-quarter Chinese, and he's as slick an article as they make 'em, a claptrap orator and they say a dashing leader. You know we stand on the brink of a powder mine. One word will do as a match, and after the explosion we'll have our hands full picking up the pieces."

"I suppose it wouldn't do to have Martí disappear?" Keith was ruminating.

"Good Lord, no! He's their George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry all rolled into one!"

"The twenty-fourth is a week from today, isn't it? Let me think it over; perhaps I can suggest something." Keith rose.

"Going so soon?"

"Yes, the old man isn't well—he thinks he's got a touch of dengue, but the doctor says it's only a bilious attack. Nevertheless, it's up to me to be on board early."

"What's become of Burdette? He never comes to the mess any more."

"Oh, doesn't he?" Keith's exclamation was quite involuntary. Fancy certainly came ashore every day he was off duty, and there were no families

with whom he could have social intercourse.

But for a time all other matters were driven out of Keith's head; the captain's spell of sickness was severe enough to make him take over command, as he was already the executive officer aboard, and for the next few days he had his hands full. Then one night a possible solution of the difficulty came to him and he sent for Howard.

Howard listened to the plan proposed, which was nothing less than a premature unveiling, and set forth a line of objections which Keith disposed of, one after another. He suggested that on the night of the twenty-second he should send two men whom he could trust to the square. They would unveil the statue and in the morning the inhabitants of Jucaro would be able to gaze upon the features of the great patriot without the delay of ceremony and the assistance of Colonel Juan Antonio.

And in the end Howard, who confessed that his own hands were tied, and yet whose orders to avoid trouble by all means were imperative, consented to the plan and Keith assumed all further responsibility.

Not being able to take charge of the work himself, he decided to send Burdette. It would give the young man a chance to distinguish himself and would be an adventure in a small way.

Fancy listened to the scheme and accepted with avidity; the possibility of danger gave it zest, and he entered into a discussion of the details with great enthusiasm. He chose Anderson, one of the men in his company, to aid him. Anderson was close-mouthed and devoted to his superior officer, for Fancy had a way of winning his men's confidence and often aided them substantially in getting out of their various scrapes.

On the night of the twenty-second he was all impatience to be off, but Keith held him back until midnight. Then he ordered a boat brought round, and he stood leaning over the side of the rail, watching it, as the long, even

strokes of the rowers pulled it rapidly toward the shore.

Burdette and Anderson were in civilians' clothes, and both had their soft hats pulled well down over their eyes. As they stepped ashore there was no one about, and as they walked swiftly up the narrow, irregular streets they met an occasional policeman, but that was all. Jucaro had been abed these two hours.

Howard's only aid had been to withdraw the police stationed in the vicinity of the plaza, so that when the two conspirators reached the scene of their labor there was no one in sight. A dim oil lamp fastened on top of a wooden post threw a ghastly shadow on the square, but they did not need more than the starlight to see the bulky outlines of the statue, swathed in white cloths. It was the work of a few minutes to unveil the monument, and as the wrappings dropped and the marble effigy of the dead patriot was revealed, Anderson shivered.

"Superstitious, eh?" questioned Burdette. "Never mind, this is good work we're doing, boy, and it's for the glory of the United States." He spoke kindly, well knowing the man's nature, and even to his eyes the calm, stern face seemed to wear a look of reproach.

"If you say it's all right, sir, that's enough for me, only I wish we was back on board ship again."

Anderson tried to smile bravely as he made a neat bundle of the cloths preparatory to carrying them down to the bay and dropping them overboard from the longboat so that no traces of them should be found.

Burdette waved his hand as they turned away.

"Adios! Glad to see you on board!" he called; then he stepped out briskly, followed by his faithful assistant.

It had been done so quietly, so easily that Burdette smiled, as he recalled his thrills of anticipation when Keith first unfolded his scheme, and though he was glad it was accomplished he wished there had been some difficulties to overcome, some hardships to en-

counter. There was nothing to show for the night's adventure, and the knowledge of it would not spread beyond the mess. Fancy would have preferred a scrimmage in which he came out on top, and a bit of the glory for gallant action, the reward of praise and a possible advancement in the service. He was thinking so deeply that he did not realize he was not taking the shortest way back to the landing, but was making a detour which had become a natural thing during the last few weeks.

Teresita's black eyes were full of mystery, Teresita's red lips were like crushed cherries, Teresita's lisping English was full of charm, and Fancy had lingered on the other side of the barred window, amused night after night. These Cuban girls were curiously guarded. A man might not enter the house and call, but he could stand outside, so close to the iron grating that he could feel the thumping of her heart, and the openings between the bars were wide enough to allow of stolen kisses.

It was a poor, dimly lighted street, but darkness favors lovers, and Fancy knew every bit of the uneven road. Teresita had warned him against a Cuban sweetheart, whom she had promptly discarded upon the appearance of the Americano, but he had laughed at her warnings and vowed he was able to look out for himself.

As he neared the little yellow house, he quickened his pace; then he remembered Anderson and he paused.

"Go on, Anderson," he commanded; "I'll join you in five minutes," and Anderson touched his hat and slouched ahead.

Burdette perceived a shadow behind the bars. It was late, but perhaps Teresita was still waiting for him, and he could not pass without a word of greeting.

"Teresita!" he whispered. Then suddenly the grating was flung open and a knife-blade flashed. Burdette had a glimpse of a man's face convulsed with hate close to his own; he felt a sharp pain and then he knew no more. He sank to the ground with a groan.

Fortunately Anderson had obeyed his orders slowly, and he was not twenty feet away when the tragedy occurred. He heard the thud of a falling body and turned swiftly and ran back to where his lieutenant lay, a huddled mass.

Fancy regained consciousness immediately.

"Get me out of this! Get me aboard ship, and never let anyone know how it happened," he murmured.

The cloths that had swathed the statue of Martí were turned into a bandage to stanch the wound in the breast of the American, and Anderson's skill soon made it possible for Burdette to rise to his feet. There was no trace of life in the yellow house, and Anderson dared not waste time in looking for the assassin; his first duty was to get the lieutenant aboard ship, and this he did, half-dragging, half-supporting him to the landing, where the sailors helped him to carry his wounded superior into the boat.

Keith was in his cabin when the long-boat was announced, and when he learned of the catastrophe he hurried at once to his friend's side, conscience-stricken.

As soon as Fancy's wound had been properly attended to and pronounced severe but not necessarily fatal, Keith sent for Anderson to learn how the affair had miscarried.

But Anderson, remembering his lieutenant's last instructions, had evolved a story to which he stuck, and that was that on leaving the plaza he and Lieutenant Burdette had been set upon by at least twenty natives, and though they fought valiantly, the lieutenant had been wounded.

There were a few discrepancies which Keith did not press home. He determined to question Fancy later on; but in the morning fever had set in and Burdette was delirious.

Howard came on board early in the afternoon. The unveiling had been a great success; the people stood in groups and chattered, but the undertone was one of relief, for Juan Antonio and his band of two thousand veterans

were dreaded rather than liked. Howard was profuse in his thanks.

"Yes, it's all right for you, but it may cost me the life of my dearest friend," Keith said sadly.

"What do you mean?" Howard had evidently heard nothing of Burdette's mishap.

Keith related Anderson's story of the occurrence.

"Strange no report of a fight has been made to me, and I sent my own men to guard the plaza this morning."

Keith's suspicion was confirmed. It was not in getting away that Fancy had met with his accident. But before he sifted the matter to the bottom he wrote out his report, and in it he asked sick leave for Lieutenant Burdette, who had practically saved the day at Jucaro.

After the report had been posted Keith unraveled the mystery, but he never allowed Anderson to see that he doubted his story, and the latter congratulated himself upon his shrewdness.

The twenty-fourth came and went. There were fireworks on the plaza and a few patriotic speeches, but as the statue had already been unveiled there was no need of Juan Antonio and his men, and they stayed away.

It was a week before Fancy was able to speak of the matter, and by that time the captain had a cable from the Department, granting Lieutenant Burdette three months' sick leave, and praising him for his gallant conduct in risking his life for the honor of the service.

He lay white-faced and haggard in his berth while Keith retold the story of that eventful evening, but when his friend had finished he burst out: "I say, Keith, old man, that's all a pack of lies! We never were set upon by a band of Cubans. It was my own folly that got me into this mess! And I can't let the Department thank me for being an ass!"

"See here, Fancy, back in the States is a little woman who loves you. Do you want her to know how you got that wound?"

Fancy groaned as Keith went on: "Of course you don't, so shut up and let the matter rest. The Department won't do any more than it has. So take your sick leave and go home, and let that blessed little woman coddle you back to health. You did what you set out to do; you unveiled the statue and prevented a probable fracas on the twenty-fourth, so drop the whole thing and try to forget what really happened."

"There never was anything in that, you believe me, don't you, Keith?" Fancy's tone was full of anxiety. He had had plenty of time to feel the pangs of shame and remorse.

Keith hesitated; then he grew magnanimous. "Yes, I do, but I can't see how your affection ever strays from your wife."

"It never has, really, and after this

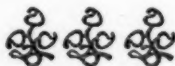
there won't be any apparent straying. I've learned my lesson." There was a moment of silence and then, "But I can't be a sneak and take the glory I don't deserve!"

"If you insist upon a rectification you get me into trouble, and you'll probably do for Anderson. Don't think only of yourself, Fancy!" Keith's voice was gruff with impatience.

There was another pause, then Fancy gave in.

"Have it your own way, old man; only I can't understand why you go out of your way to do so much for me," he remarked.

"Oh, can't you!" and Keith's mouth twisted into a crooked smile. He was remembering his vow to save Agnes Burdette's peace of mind, no matter what it should cost him or Fancy.



THE RIVAL

By Theodore Hinman Simmons

HE told my Nell—it was a lie—
He shook his head and said that I
Had smiled upon another maid
Quite unashamed; and she displayed
Her pleasure in her glances shy.

He then went on—the rascal sly—
To sympathize, and, with a sigh,
"Your lover's faithless, I'm afraid,"
He told my Nell.

At first she made a proud reply:
"He faithless? That I must deny!"
But well he lied and long he stayed
Till he convinced her—fickle jade!—
And that is how, and when, and why,
He tolled my knell!



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And he was wondrous wise
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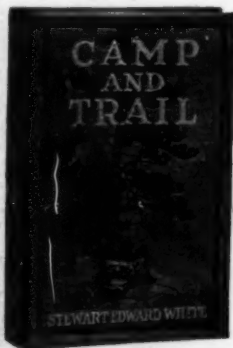
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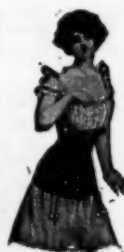


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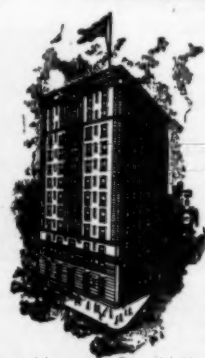
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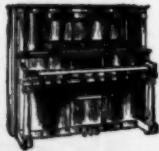
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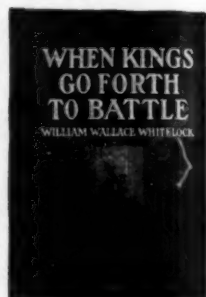
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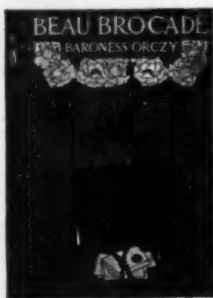
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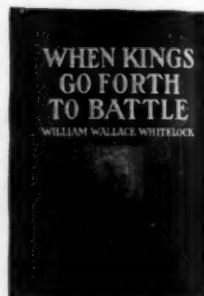
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